

ELK HUNTING IN IDAHO: UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS AND EXPERIENCES OF HUNTERS



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For:

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OVERVIEW

The main goal of this study of Idaho Elk hunters is to provide the Idaho Department of Fish and Game representative information about the views of elk hunters in Idaho. Descriptions of who they are, what their preferences and motivations are, how they make decisions about where to hunt, and their opinions on various Elk management issues were collected in the summer of 2012. This study is the first comprehensive investigation of Idaho Elk hunters since a similar study was conducted by the University of Idaho over 20 years ago in 1988-89, and provides an important update to knowledge about Elk hunters. The results provided here, in combination with biological data, are key to continuing to improve wildlife planning and management in the state of Idaho.

SURVEY OBJECTIVES

This current study was designed to provide contemporary data for the quantification of the following characteristics of a sample Idaho Elk hunters:

1. Hunting Elk hunter profiles (basic demographics, travel patterns, hunting history, harvest success, zone use);
2. Elk hunting preferences and motivations;
3. Acceptability of current and proposed management strategies and the trade-offs involved;
4. Decisions about where to hunt;
5. Attributes of a quality Elk hunting experience;
6. Hunting satisfaction; and
7. Perceptions of predators

METHODS

Survey research using a mail back and web-based instrument was used to collect data from stratified random samples of hunters licensed to hunt Elk in 2011 Idaho. This study uses a differential design (Graziano & Raulin, 2007), seeking to understand selected characteristics of groups designated on the basis of preexisting variables. The questionnaire (survey instrument) was designed with input from representatives of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. The instrument was pre-tested on a convenience sample of Moscow, Idaho, residents who had similar recreational propensities that the study required.

Questionnaires were designed and administered using a hybrid approach based on the industry-standard *Tailored Design Method* (Dillman 1978; Dillman 2000; Salant & Dillman 1984). A hybrid approach (Best 2005; Ellis, Krumpe & Sanyal 2005; Sanyal, Krumpe & Coombs, 2008; Coombs & Sanyal, 2008) to survey research using both a mail-back instrument and a web-based site was used to administer the survey instruments. All questions and response formats in the web-based survey were identical to those in the printed mail-back survey instrument. This allows the data from both to be combined for statistical analyses. This hybrid approach combines the strengths of mail and Internet surveys to reduce costs and increase response rates. Literature suggests that the use of

both web and mail questionnaires enhances the sampling representation since it permits responses from people that are technologically advanced as well as from those that are not (Beebe, Locke, Barnes, Davern & Anderson, 2006). The combination of web and mail questionnaires also helps to minimize the non-response error by allowing each person the freedom to choose the questionnaire type (i.e., web or mail).

Mailings and the on-line survey began on May 22, 2012, and continued through July 20, 2012. We continued to collect returned surveys through July 24, 2012. Mailings included a printed instrument with a cover letter from the principal investigators for the University of Idaho, on UI letterhead. A reminder was sent out 10 days after the initial mailing, and replacement surveys were mailed out approximately every three weeks after that to those who had not yet responded. The questionnaire included several different types of response formats (close-ended with ordered and unordered choices, partially closed ended, and open-ended). Response formats for all interval scales were constructed using magnitude estimators (Bass, Cascio, & O'Connor, 1974). This ensured that all interval measures were true equal interval scales that the data could be analyzed quantitatively, and the findings compared across sub-populations or with the findings of other studies using similar scale development procedures. In addition, the survey contained two open-ended questions in which the respondents could express their opinions in writing, and these will be analyzed and reported in a subsequent publication. Human subjects approval for this project was obtained from the University of Idaho Institutional Review Board.

SAMPLING

The sample was a stratified random sample of Idaho residents:

- Mailed to 6,200 hunters who purchased a general Elk tag in 2011.
- Sample was stratified by the 29 Elk hunting zones
- Random sample of 200 resident and 20 nonresident hunters in each of the 29 elk zones.
- N=6,200 hunters (18 or older) from all Idaho Elk hunting licensees in 2011 (data from Idaho Department of Fish and Game)

RESPONSE RATE

A total of 2,786 useable questionnaires were returned and used in the analyses, which is a 48.5% response rate after accounting for undeliverable instruments and refusals. This response is judged to be adequate to produce a statistically representative sample of the population of Idaho Elk hunters at $\pm 10\%$ level of accuracy.

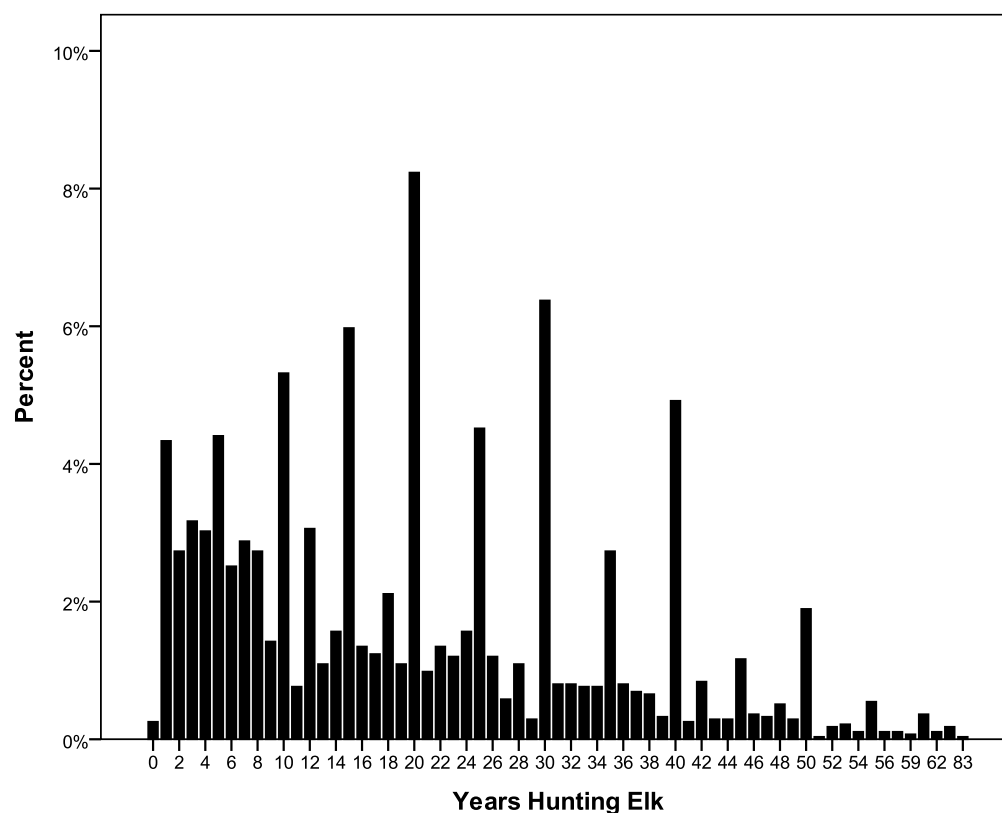
ELK HUNTER PROFILES

(TRAVEL PATTERNS, HUNTING HISTORY, HARVEST SUCCESS, ZONE USE)

Now, some questions about your Idaho Elk hunting experiences and preferences.

3. About how many years have you hunted Elk in Idaho? *(Please enter the number of years)*

_____ YEARS



Q3: The respondents to the Elk Hunting Survey are very experienced hunters; they have hunted in Idaho an average of 24 years and have hunted Elk in Idaho an average of 20. In addition, they hunt Mule Deer most years and upland game/birds and White-tailed Deer some years, too.

The majority of the respondents (from 65.5% to 83.4%) have hunted Elk in Idaho every year since 2005.

7. Excluding your travel to and from your home, how often do you use the following mode of transportation when you hunt Elk in Idaho?

TRAVEL MODE

- A. Car/truck
- B. Horse/pack animals
- C. Mountain bike
- D. OHV
- E. On foot

How often do you use each travel mode
when hunting Elk in Idaho?

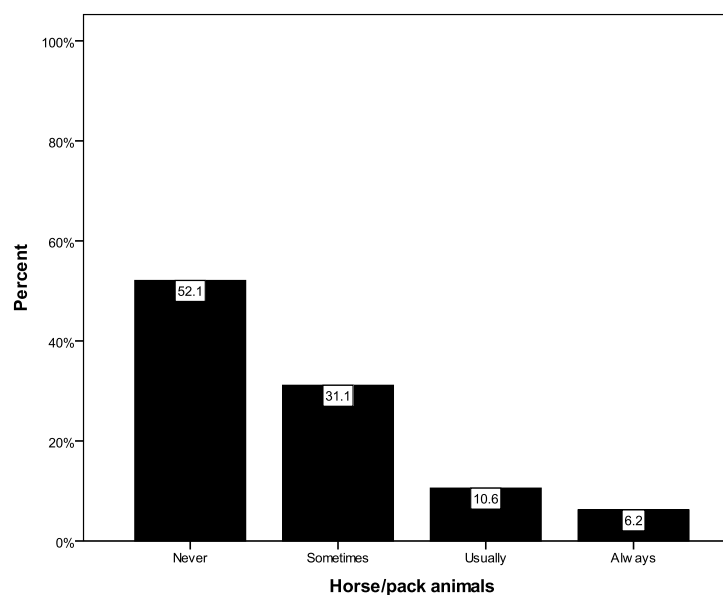
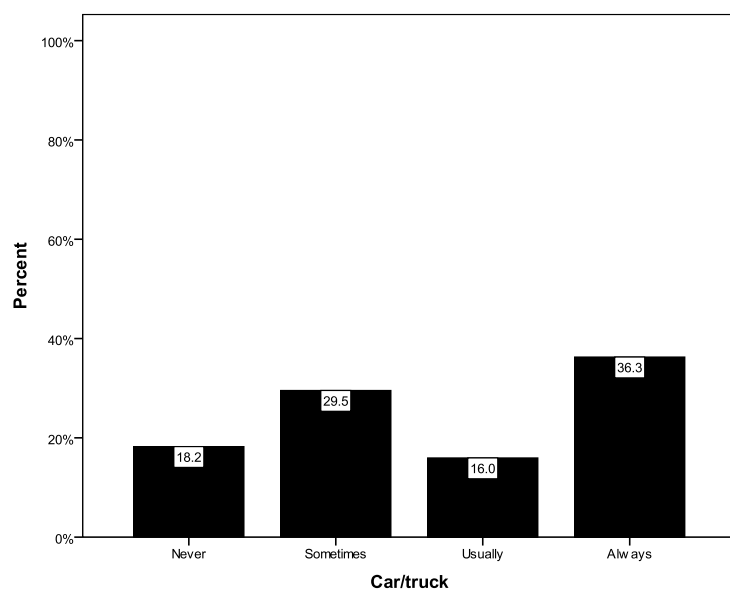
(Please circle one response for each mode of travel)

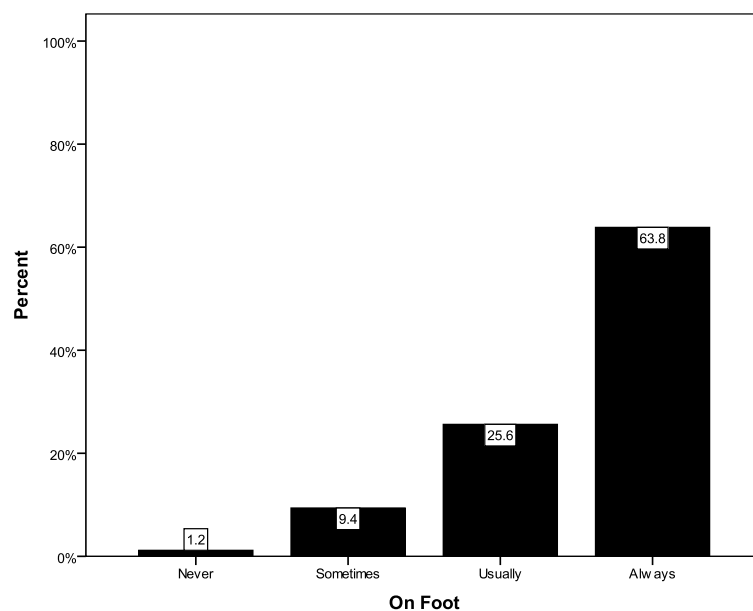
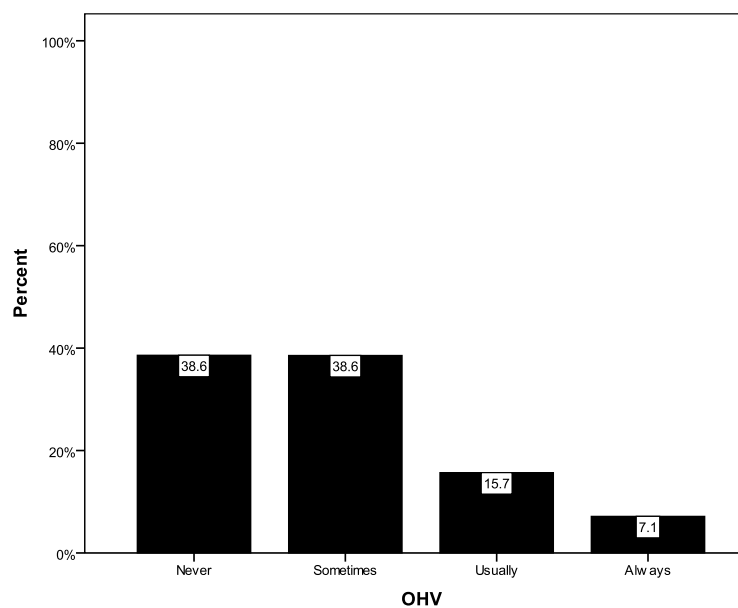
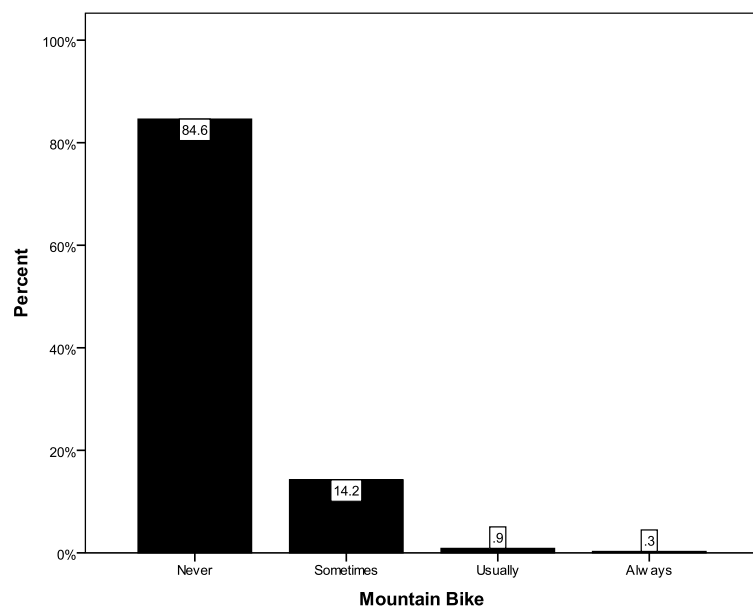
NEVER

SOMETIMES

USUALLY

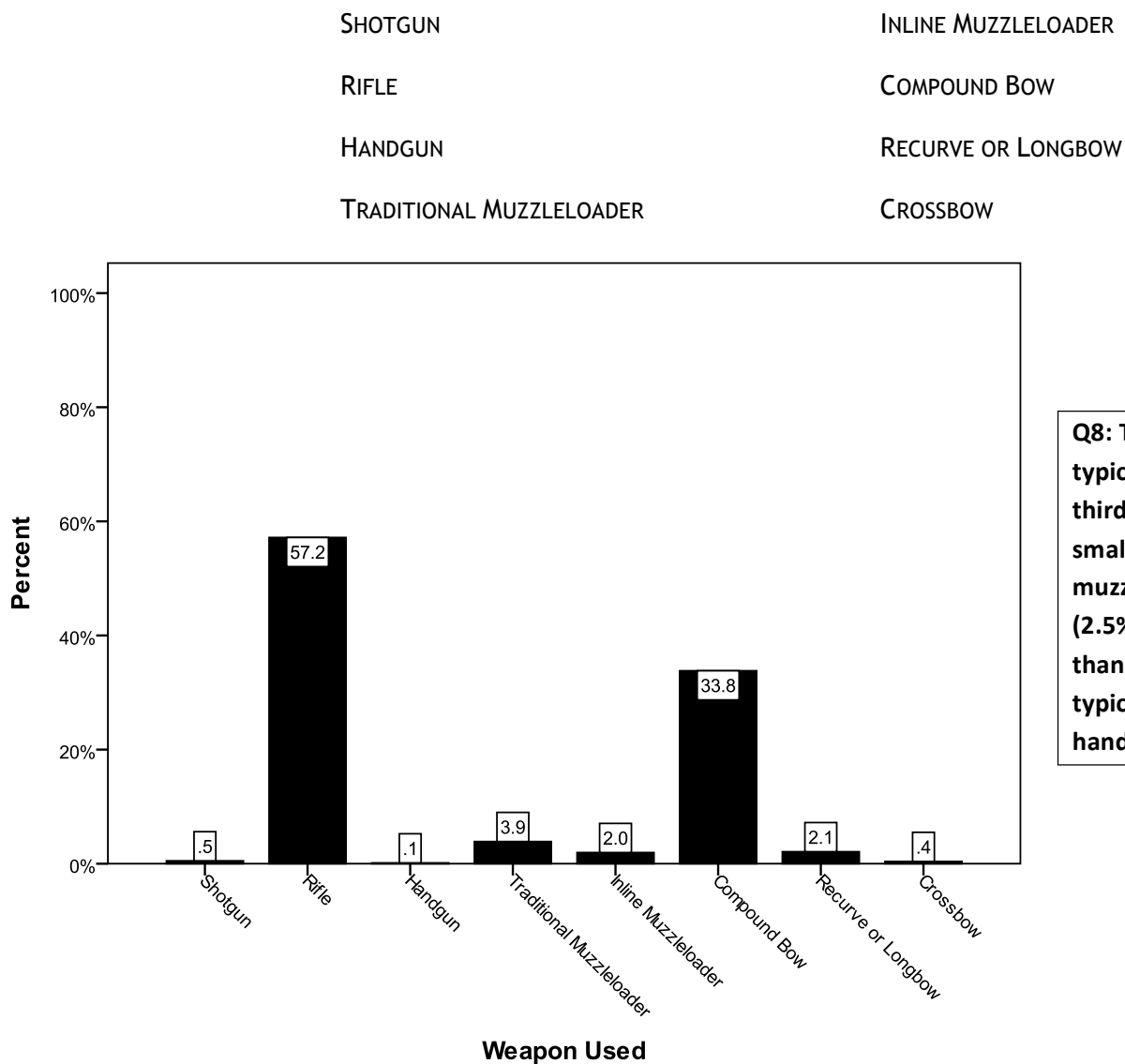
ALWAYS





Q7: Hunters most frequently travel on foot when hunting, but they also use a car or truck in their hunting trips. About one-third use OHVs or horse/pack animals. They almost never use mountain bikes.

8. What type of weapon do you typically use to hunt Elk in Idaho? (Please check only one response)



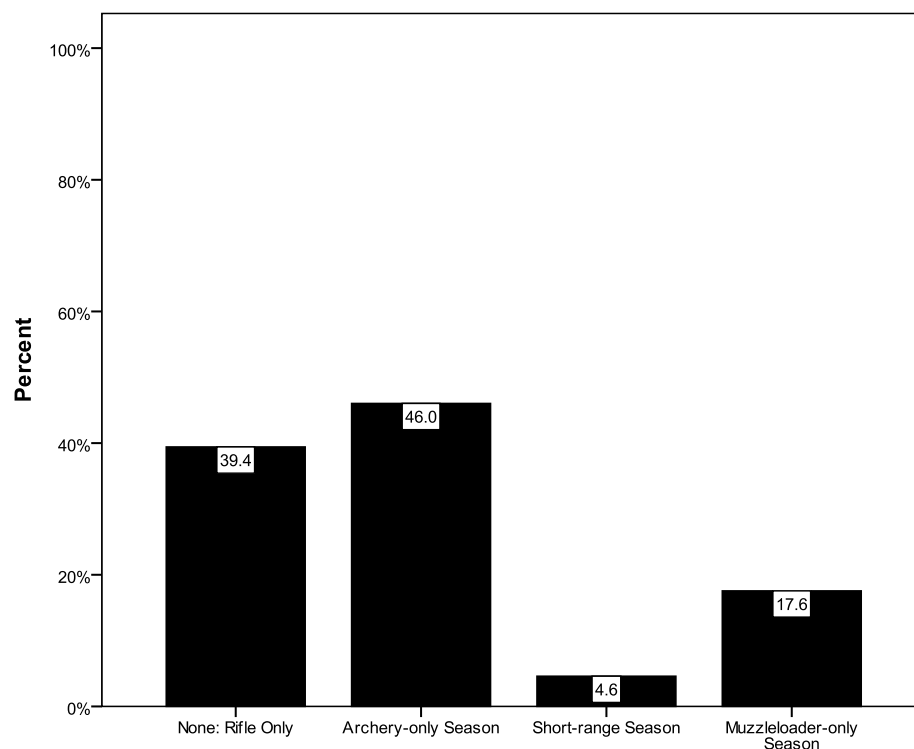
Q8: The majority (57.2%) of Elk hunters typically use a rifle to hunt and about one-third (33.8%) use a compound bow. A much smaller contingent primarily uses traditional muzzleloaders (3.9%), recurve or longbows (2.5%) or inline muzzleloaders (2.0%). Less than one percent reported that they typically used a shotgun, crossbow or handgun.

9. Which of the following Idaho Elk archery, short-range weapons or muzzleloader seasons did you hunt in during the last 7 years (2005-2011)? (Please check all that apply)

- ☐ NONE, I ONLY HUNTED ELK WITH A RIFLE →→→ PLEASE CONTINUE TO Q-11, ON THE NEXT PAGE.
- ☐ I HUNTED IN ARCHERY-ONLY SEASONS
- ☐ I HUNTED IN SHORT-RANGE WEAPON SEASONS
- ☐ I HUNTED IN MUZZLELOADER-ONLY SEASONS



(See Question 10 on the next page)



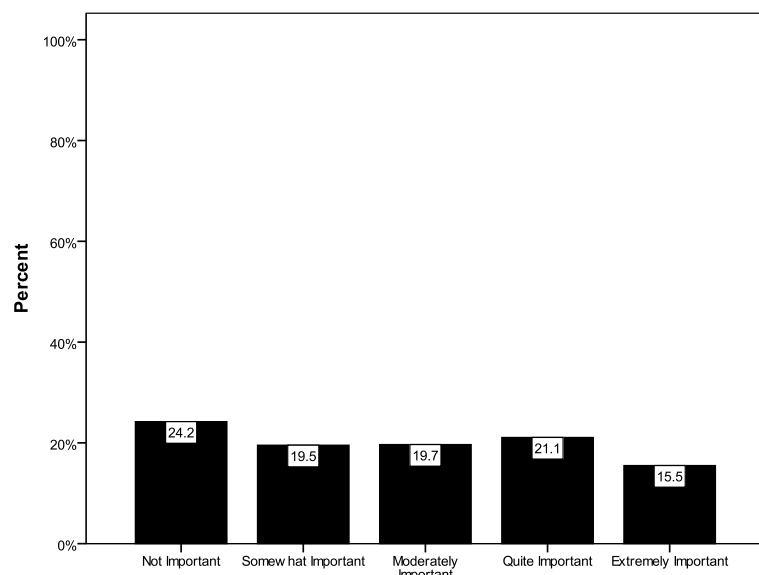
Q9: The Elk hunters in the last seven years, who did not only hunt elk with a rifle, pursue their sport with a variety of weapons and seasons. While 38% report they only hunted Elk with a rifle, slightly more (46%), hunted in archery-only seasons, about 18% hunted in muzzleloader-only seasons, and 5% hunted in short-range weapon seasons.

10. How important was each of the following in your decision to hunt during Elk archery, short-range weapons or muzzleloader seasons?

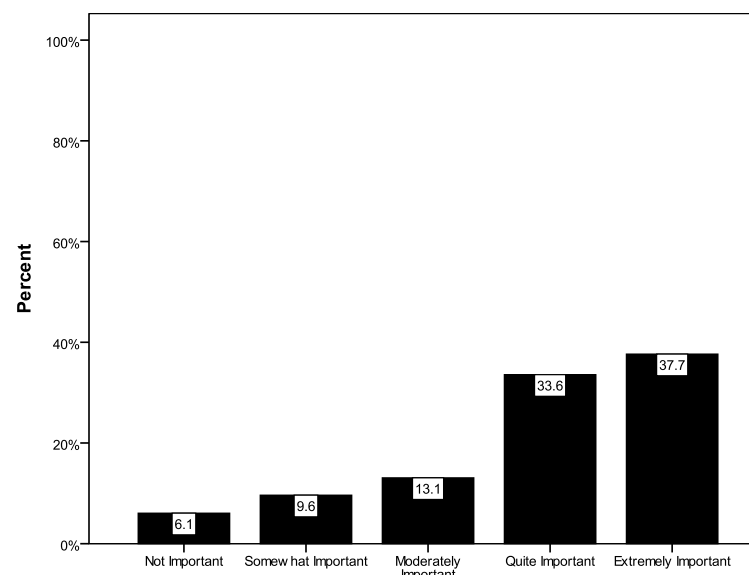
REASONS FOR ARCHERY, SHORT-RANGE WEAPONS OR MUZZLELOADER HUNTING

How important was each reason for hunting during Elk archery, short-range weapons or muzzleloader seasons?
(Please circle one response for each reason)

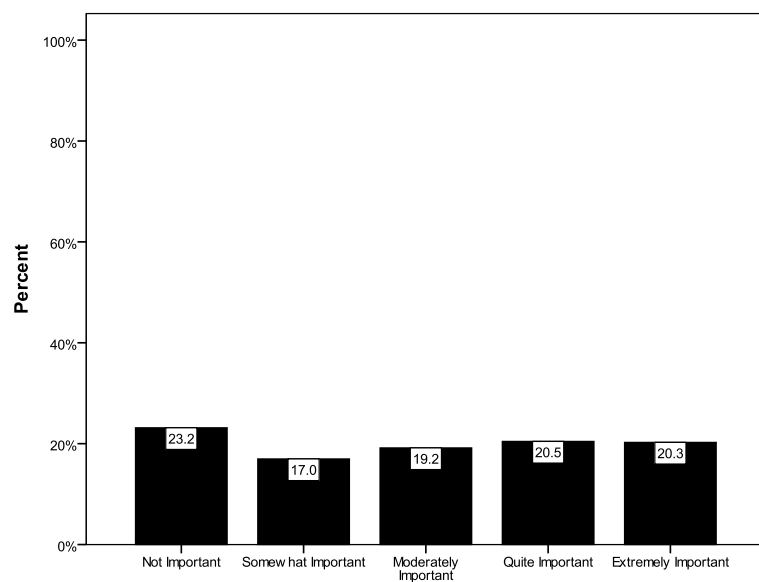
- | | NOT
IMPORTANT | SOMEWHAT
IMPORTANT | MODERATELY
IMPORTANT | QUITE
IMPORTANT | EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT |
|--|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| A. To increase the challenge. | | | | | |
| B. To hunt when fewer hunters are a-field. | | | | | |
| C. To improve my chance of harvesting an Elk. | | | | | |
| D. To expand my hunting season. | | | | | |
| E. To hunt in a zone where rifle Elk hunting opportunity is limited. | | | | | |
| F. For the adventure. | | | | | |
| G. To engage in traditional forms of hunting. | | | | | |
| H. To build my confidence as an Elk hunter. | | | | | |
| I. To hunt Elk during the rut. | | | | | |



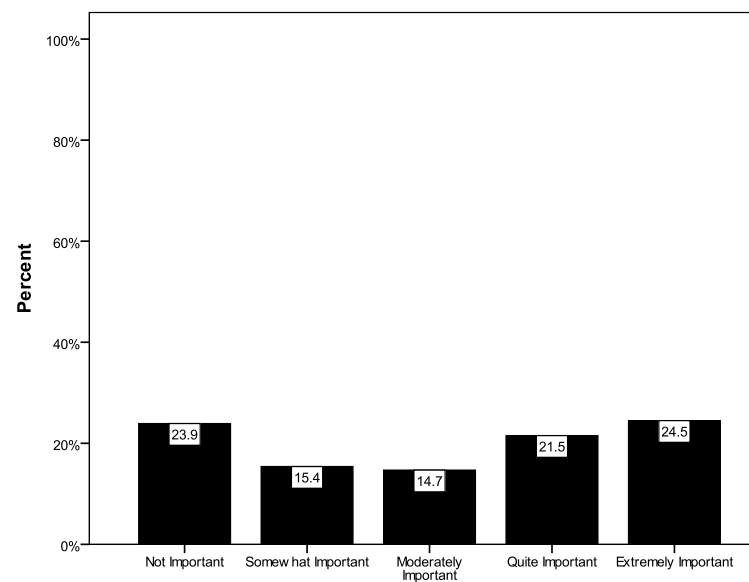
Increase Challenge



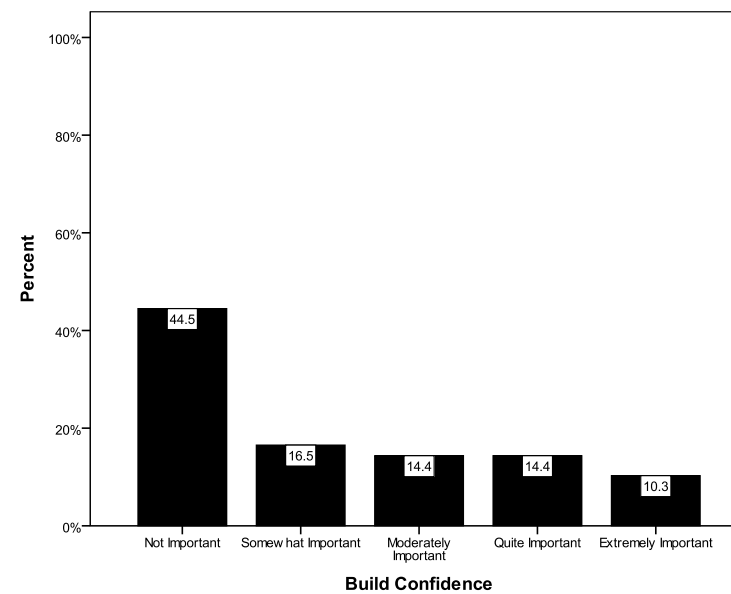
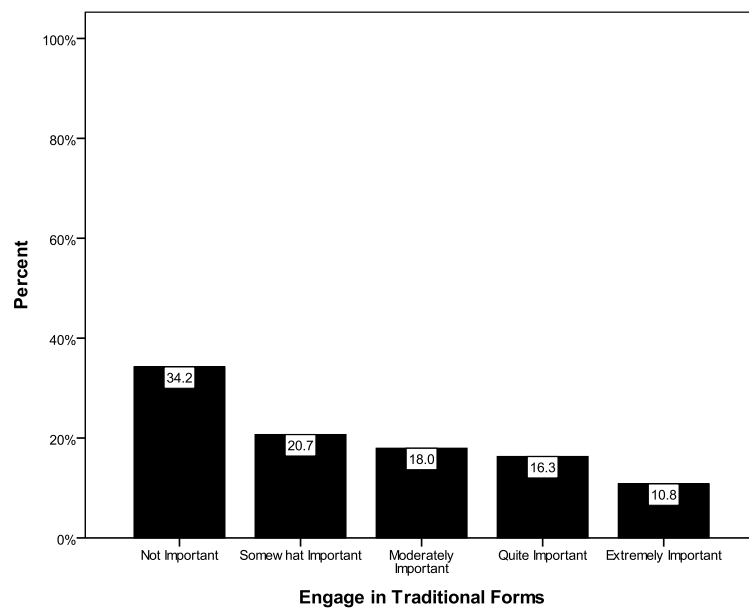
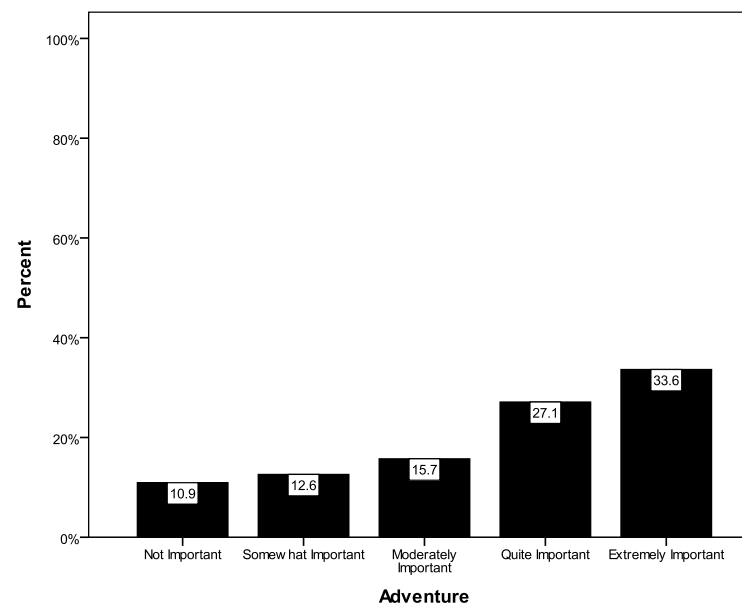
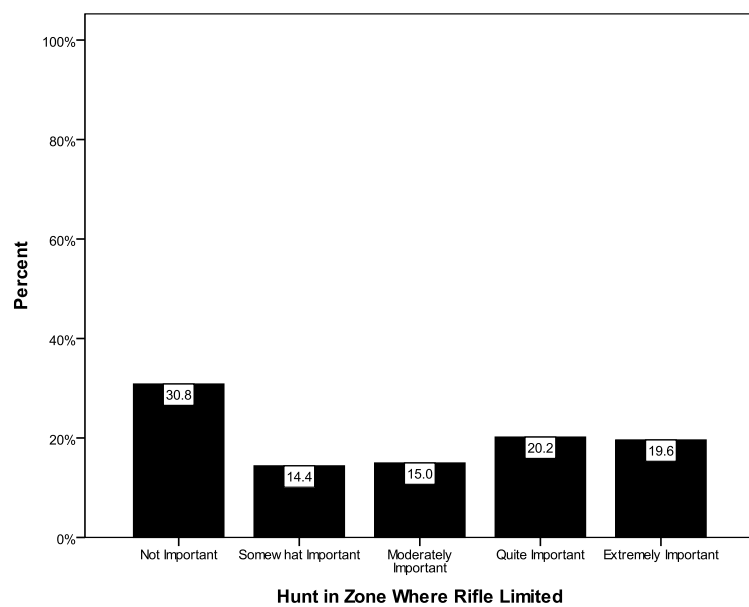
Hunt With Few Hunters on Field

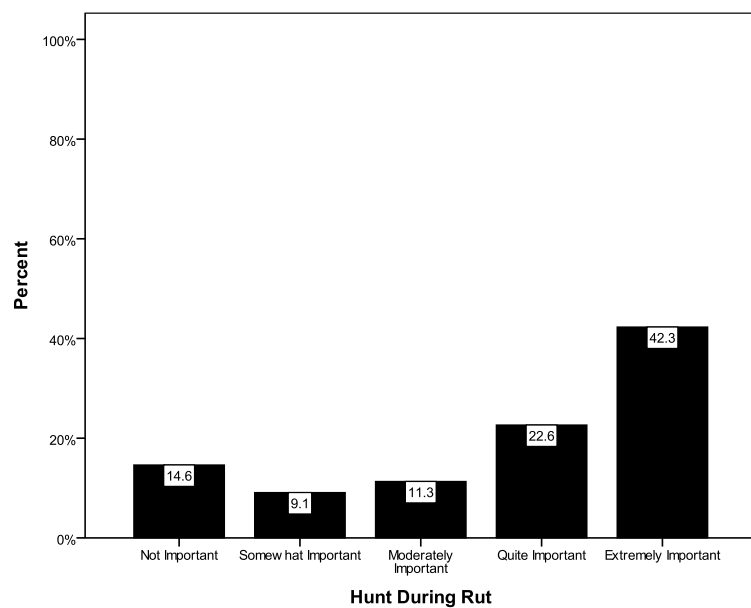


Improve Chance of Harvesting



Expand Hunting Season





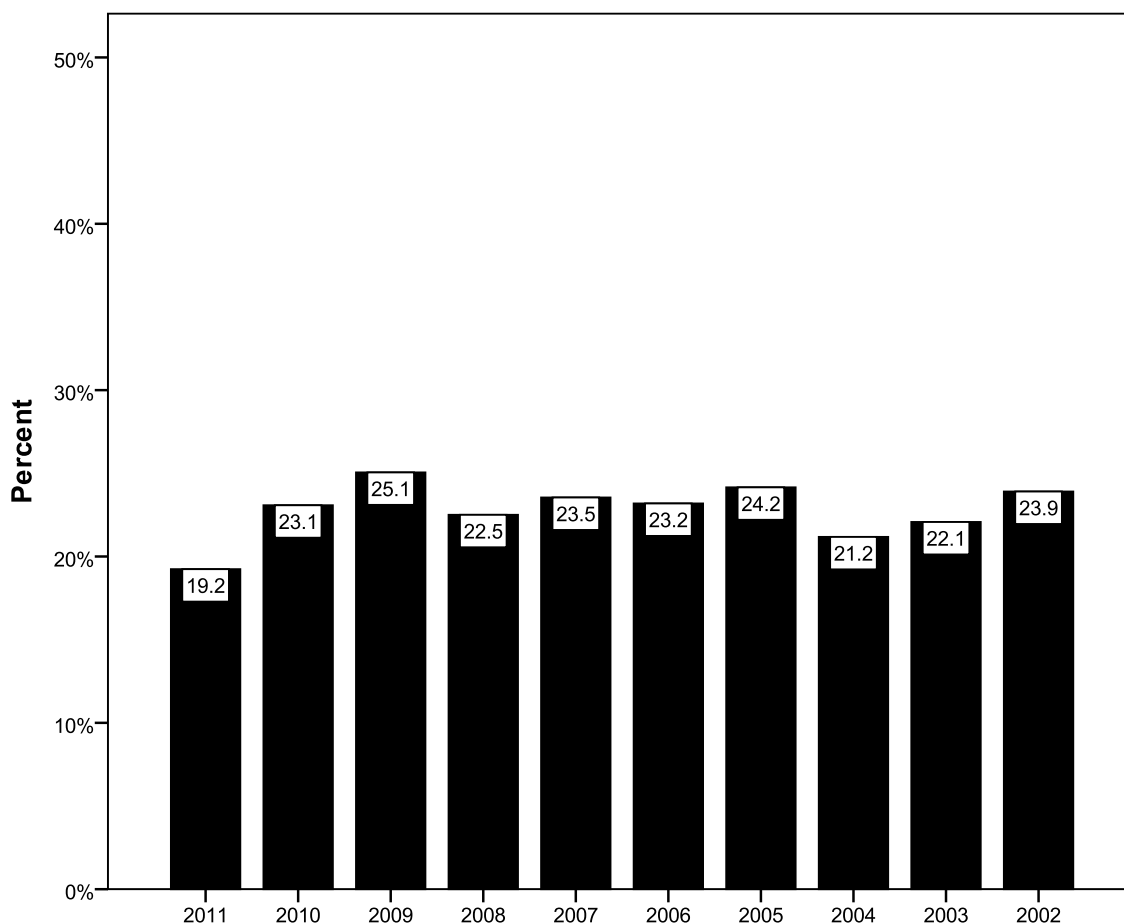
Q10: The two primary reasons they decide to hunt during Elk archery, short-range weapons or muzzleloader seasons is to hunt when fewer hunters are afield, to hunt during the rut, and for the adventure of hunting with these types of weapons. Also, moderately important were the opportunity to expand their hunting season and to improve their chance of harvesting an Elk.

11. What has been your Elk harvesting success in Idaho? *(Please check all that apply)*

☐ I HAVE NEVER HARVESTED AN ELK IN IDAHO. →→ PLEASE CONTINUE TO Q-12, BELOW.

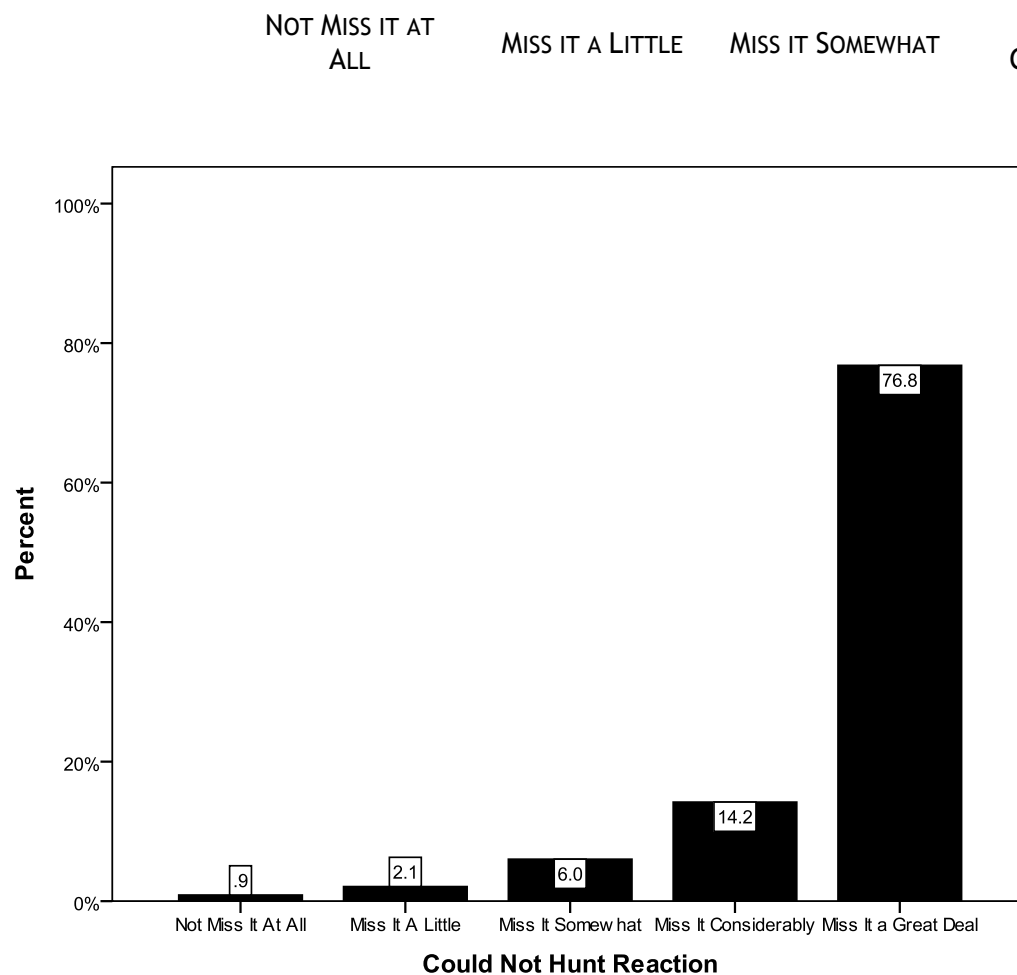
☐ I HARVESTED AN ELK IN IDAHO IN: *(Circle all the years that you harvest an Elk in Idaho)*

2011 2010 2009 2008 2007 2006 2005 2004 2003 2002



Q11: Overall, hunters are fairly successful in harvesting Elk in Idaho, with 75% reporting they have harvested Elk in the past ten years and about 22% to 25% harvesting Elk in each of the past ten years.

12. If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho, how would you react? (Please check only one response)



□ Q12: Almost all Idaho Elk hunters are dedicated to the sport, and if for some reason they could not hunt Elk in Idaho, they would miss it a great deal.

13. If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho, how would your hunting change?

CHANGES TO YOUR HUNTING

If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho,
how would your hunting change?

(Please check one response for each change)

A. I would hunt waterfowl more.

VERY
UNLIKELY

UNLIKELY

NEITHER
UNLIKELY NOR
LIKELY

LIKELY

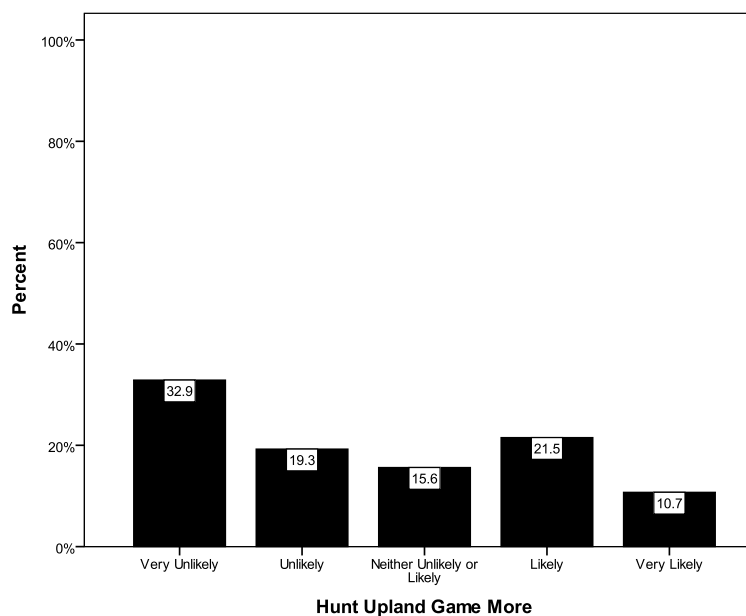
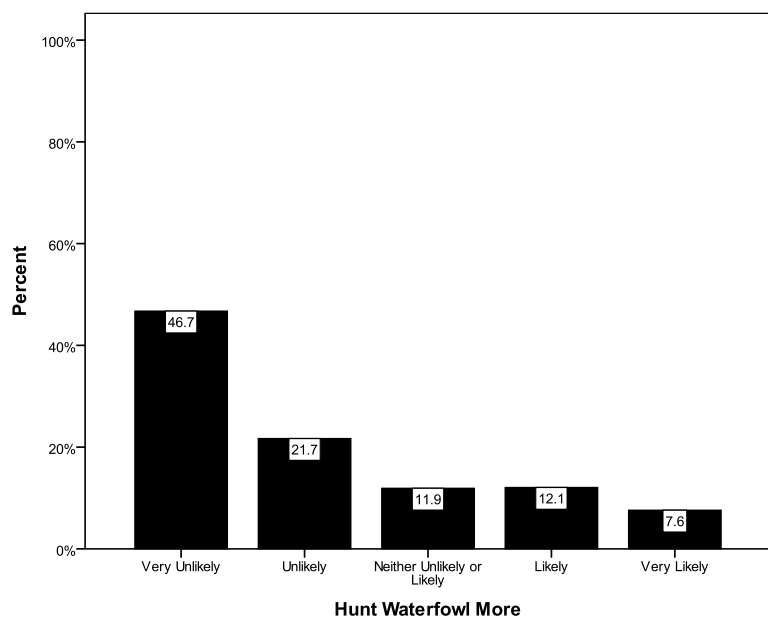
VERY
LIKELY

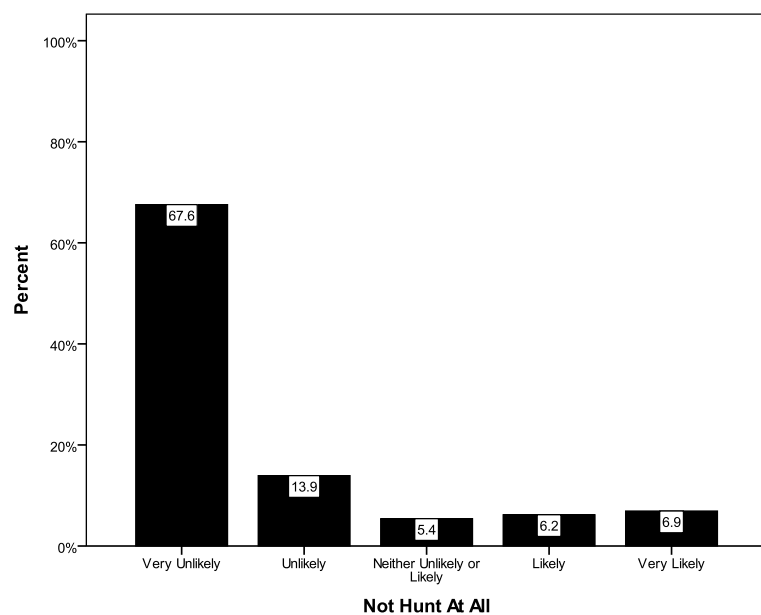
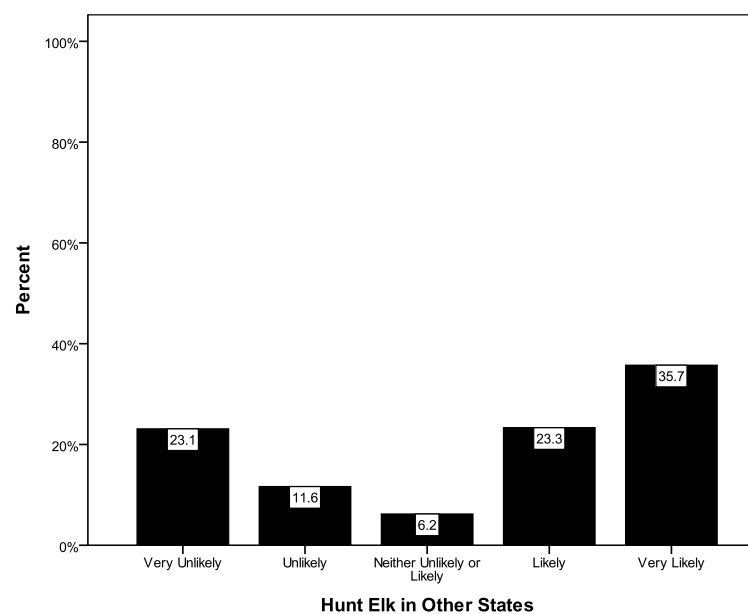
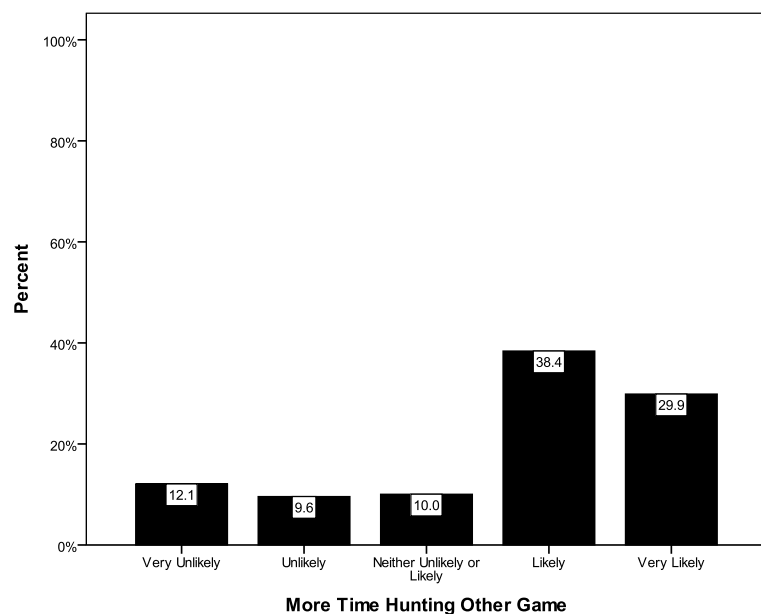
B. I would hunt upland game more.

C. I would spend more time
hunting other big game.

D. I would hunt Elk in other states.

E. I would not hunt at all.



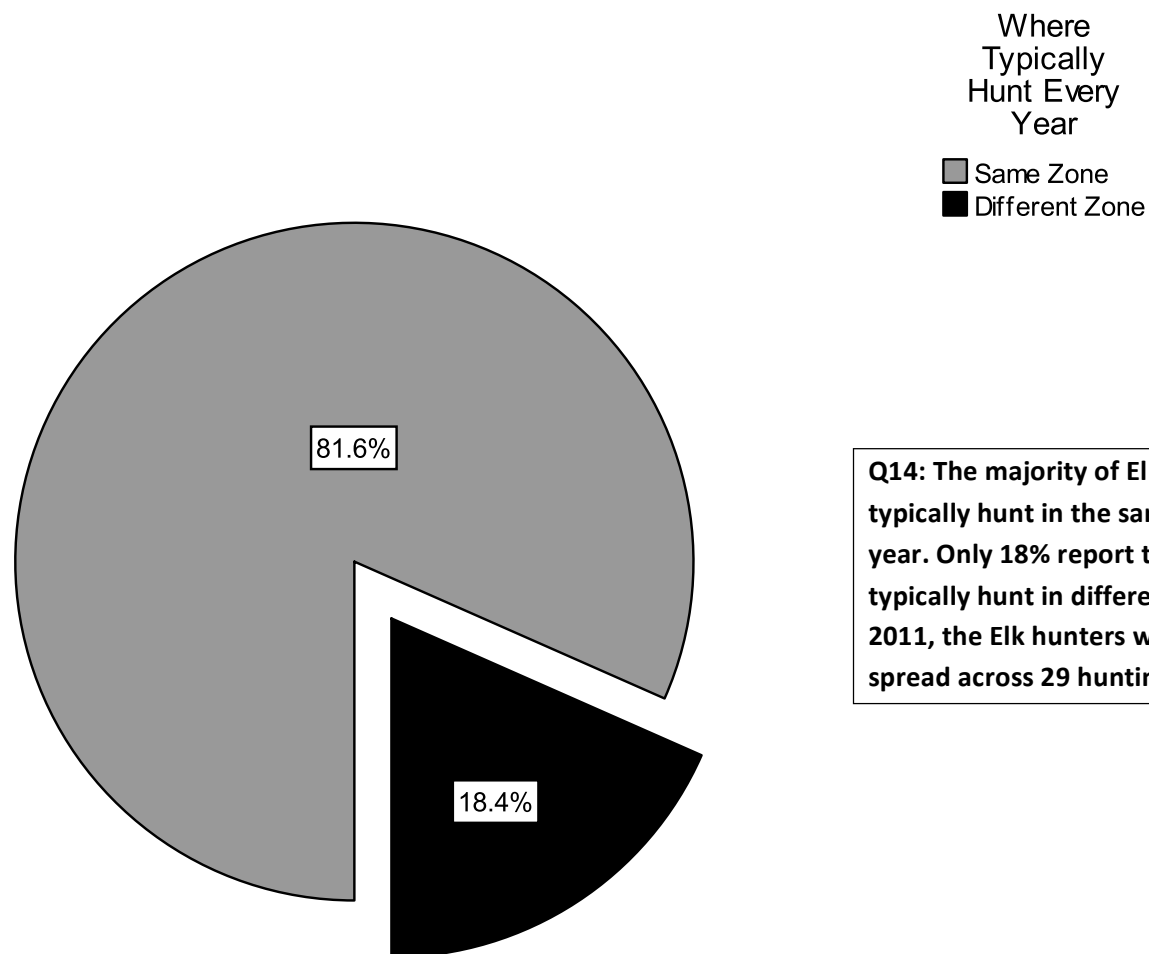


Q13: If they could not hunt Elk in Idaho, hunters reported they would spend more time hunting other big game, or they would hunt Elk in other states. Not hunting at all, hunting waterfowl more, or hunting upland game more were not seen as viable options.

14. Which of the following best describes where you typically hunt Elk in Idaho? (Please check only one response)

I TYPICALLY HUNT IN THE SAME ZONE EVERY YEAR.

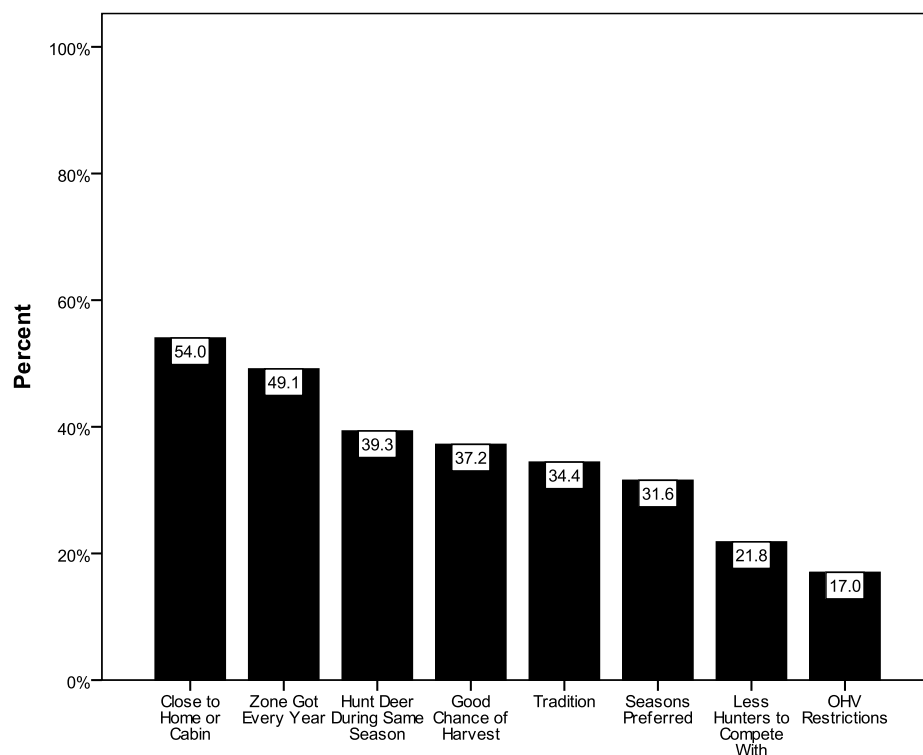
I TYPICALLY HUNT IN DIFFERENT ZONES EACH YEAR.



Q14: The majority of Elk hunters (82%) typically hunt in the same zone every year. Only 18% report that they typically hunt in different zones. In 2011, the Elk hunters were very evenly spread across 29 hunting zones.

16. What makes the zone(s) you marked in Q-15 desirable to hunt Elk? (Please check all that apply)

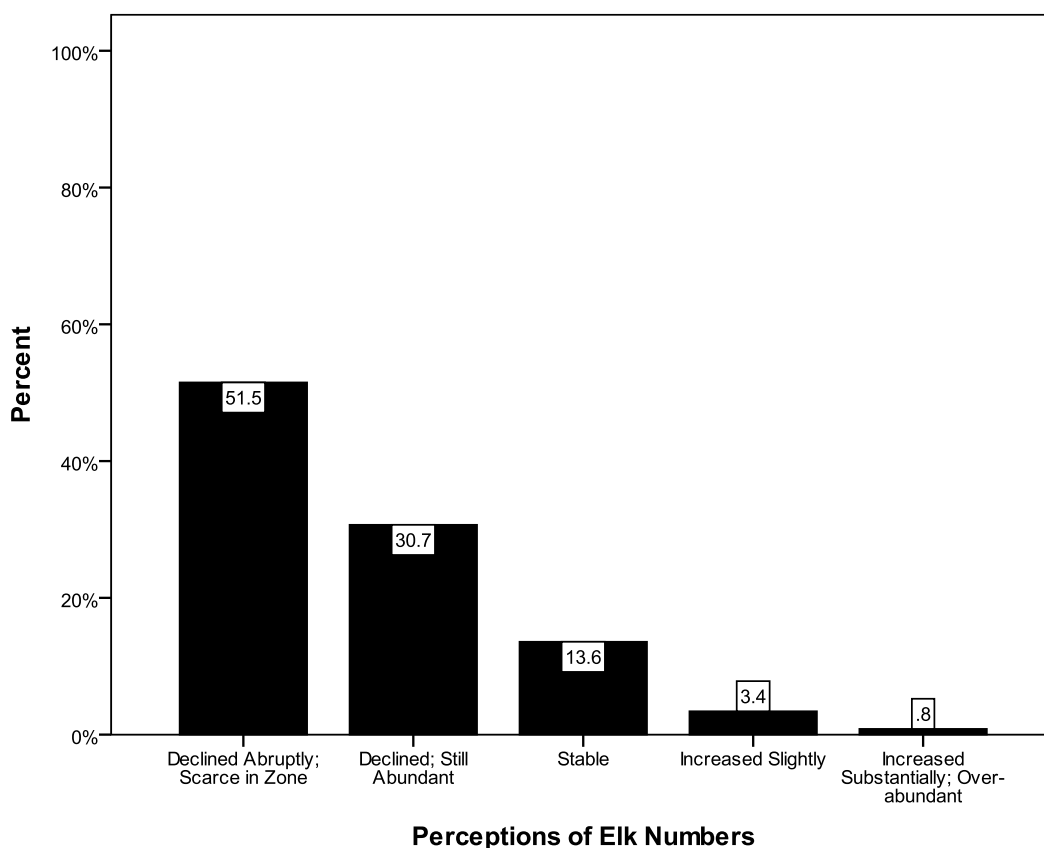
- ☐ IT IS CLOSE TO MY HOME OR CABIN.
- ☐ TRADITION—I ALWAYS HUNT THERE.
- ☐ IT PROVIDES A GOOD CHANCE OF HARVESTING AN ELK.
- ☐ IT HAS THE SEASONS I PREFER.
- ☐ IT IS A GENERAL ZONE THAT I CAN GET EVERY YEAR (*NOT A CONTROLLED HUNT*).
- ☐ THERE ARE NOT MANY HUNTERS THERE COMPETING WITH ME FOR ELK.
- ☐ I CAN ALSO HUNT DEER DURING THE SAME SEASON.
- ☐ IT HAS OHV RESTRICTIONS.



Q16: When asked what makes the zone they hunted in 2011 desirable, half the hunters said a zone that was close to their home or cabin, and half said a general zone that they can get every year (not a controlled hunt) was most desirable. This was followed by a zone where they can also hunt deer during the same season and a good chance of harvesting an Elk.

17. What are your perceptions of Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? Select the ONE statement from the list below that most closely matches your perceptions. (Please check only one response)

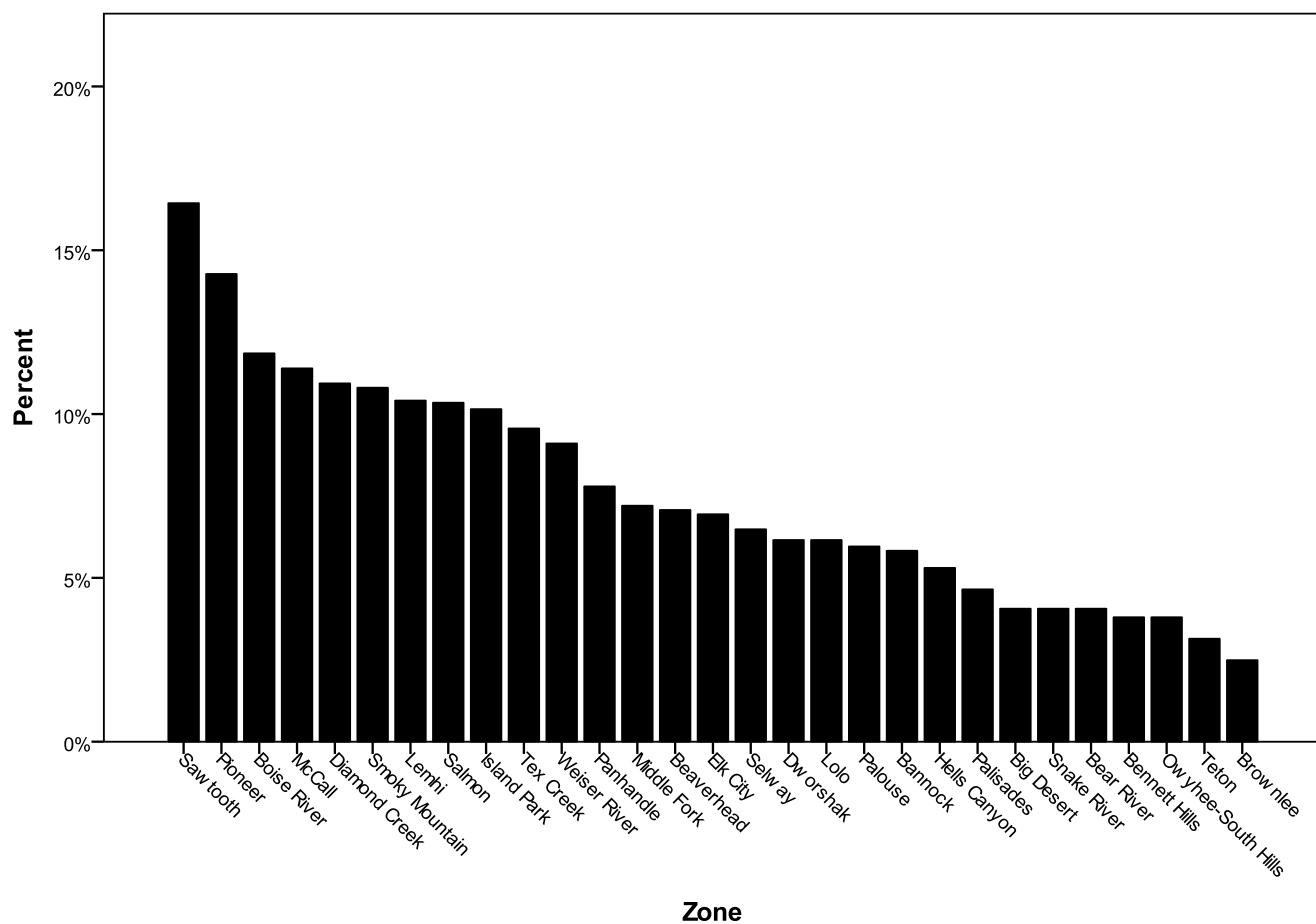
- ☐ Elk numbers have declined abruptly in the last 10 years and Elk are scarce in the zone.
- ☐ Elk numbers have declined in the last 10 years, but still remain relatively abundant.
- ☐ Elk numbers have remained stable in the last 10 years.
- ☐ Elk numbers have increased slightly in the last 10 years.
- ☐ Elk numbers have increased substantially in the last 10 years and Elk are over-abundant.



Q17: One-half of the Elk hunters perceive that in 2011 Elk numbers have declined abruptly in the last 10 years and Elk are scarce in the zone they hunted. About 45% perceived thought that Elk numbers have declined in the last 10 years, but still remain relatively abundant or stable.

18. If you hunted in more than one zone in the past 10 years, please list them below.

(Please write in the Zone names, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)



□ **Q18: Percents sum to more than 100% because hunters hunted in more than one zone over a ten year period.**

20. How long have you hunted Elk in each of the zones you listed in Q-18?

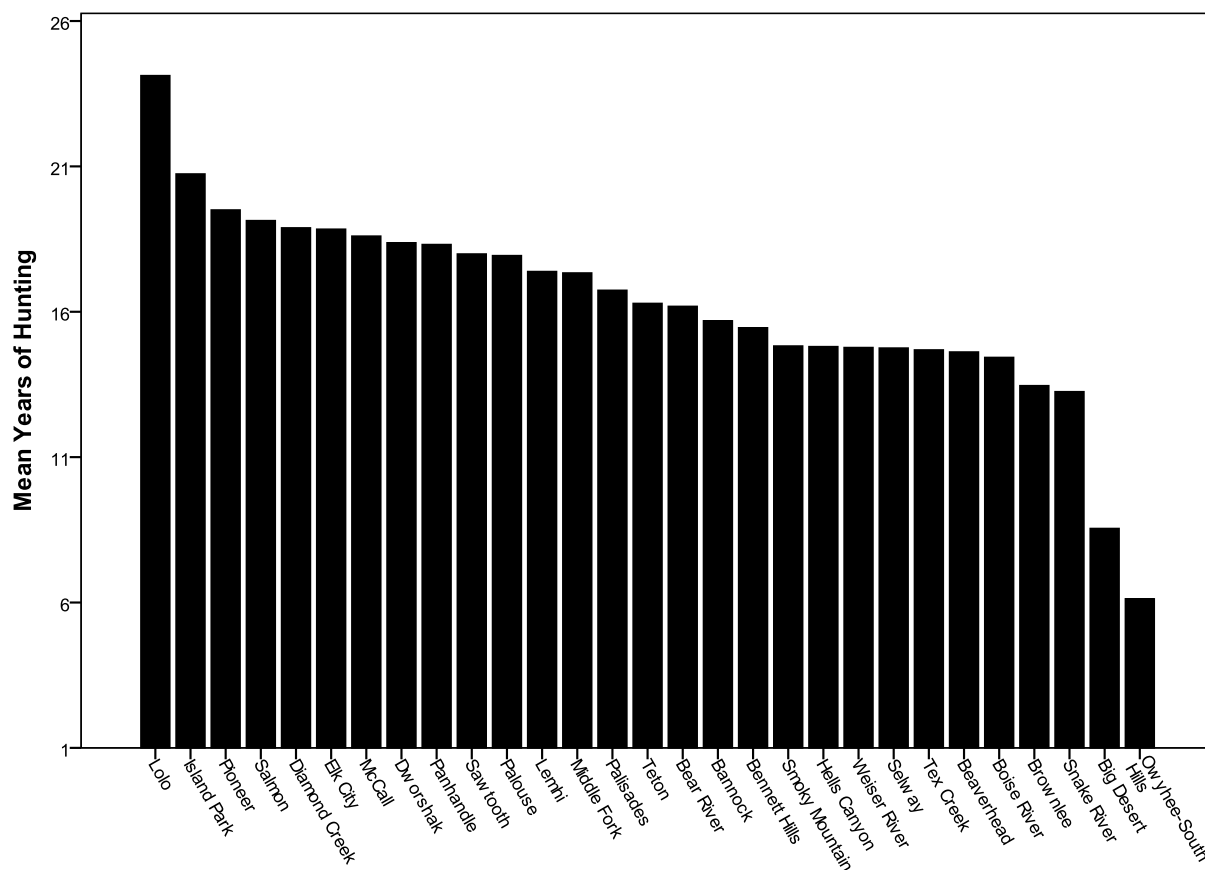
(Please write in the name of the zone and number of years, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)

I HAVE HUNTED IN THE _____ ZONE FOR _____ YEARS.

I HAVE HUNTED IN THE _____ ZONE FOR _____ YEARS.

I HAVE HUNTED IN THE _____ ZONE FOR _____ YEARS.

I HAVE HUNTED IN THE _____ ZONE FOR _____ YEARS.

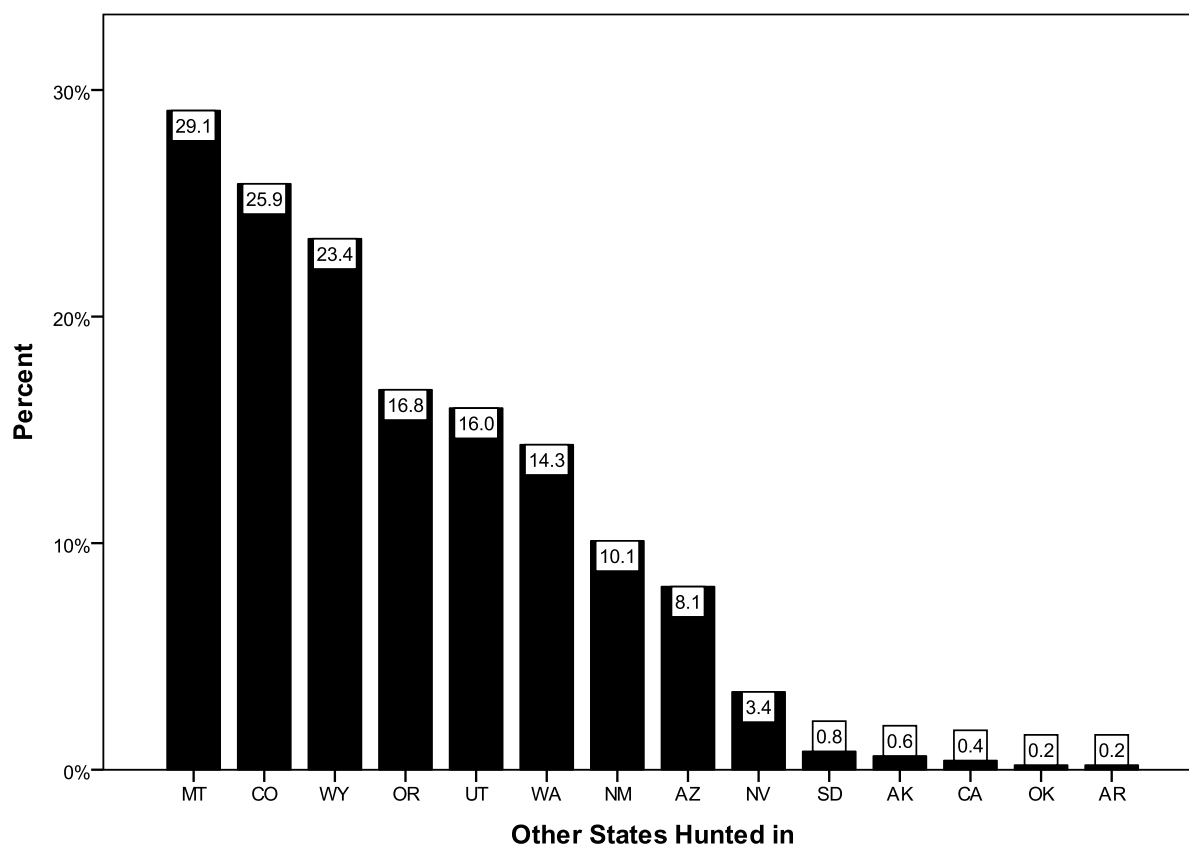


□ Q20: Elk hunters have hunted in their preferred zones on average for over 14 years.

21. Do you also hunt for Elk in other states? *(Please check one response)*

☐ YES ☐ NO, PLEASE CONTINUE TO Q-22 ON THE NEXT PAGE.

▪ If YES, please list the states:
▪ ►



□ Q21: About 19% of Idaho Elk hunters also hunted Elk in other states. Those who hunted Elk in other states most frequently did so in Montana, Colorado and Wyoming

22. What do you believe is the primary factor limiting Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? (Check only ONE response)

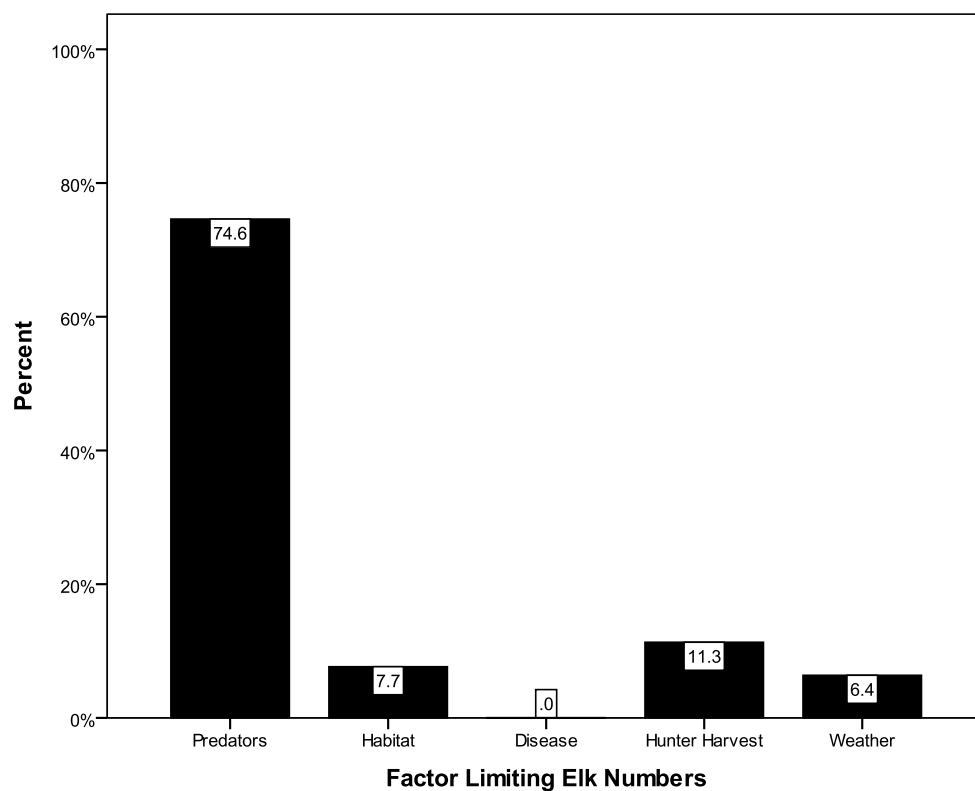
PREDATORS

HABITAT

DISEASE

HUNTER HARVEST

WEATHER

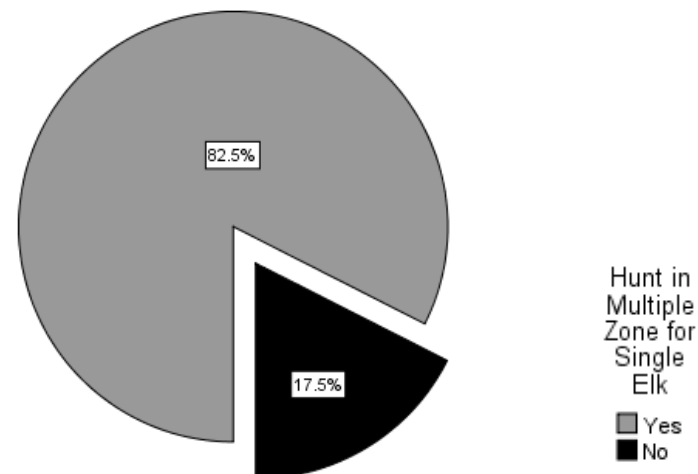


□ Q22: Three-quarters of the hunters believe predators are the primary factor limiting Elk numbers in the zone they hunted, while a much smaller proportion thought the limiting factor was related to hunter harvest (11%) or habitat (7.7%).

23. Would you like to be able to hunt in multiple zones in a year for a single Elk? *(Please check one response)*

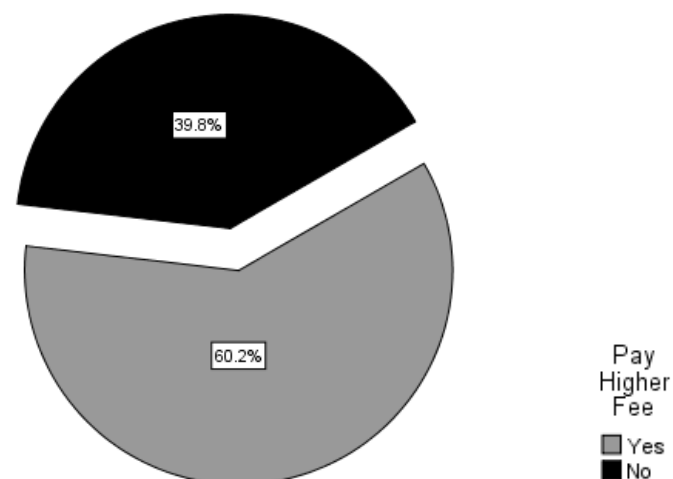
☐ YES ☐ NO

A large majority (82%) would like to be able to hunt in multiple zones, and over one-half would be willing to pay a higher fee to do so (e.g. \$100 more for non-residents and \$30 more for residents).



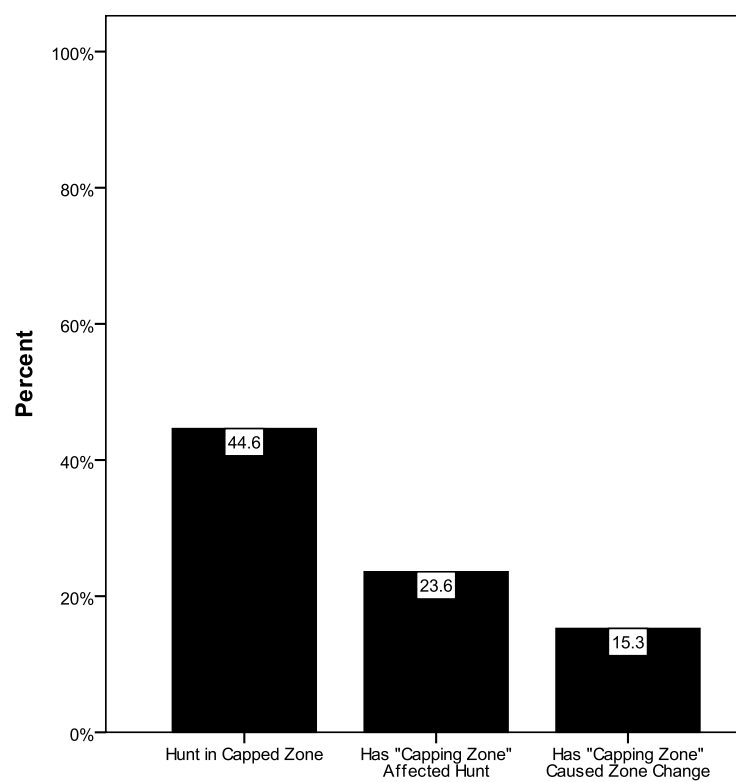
24. If YES, would you be willing to pay a higher fee (\$100 more for non-residents; \$30 more for residents) to do so? *(Please check one response)*

☐ YES ☐ NO



25. When the zone system was implemented the mechanism for reducing unlimited over-the-counter opportunity called “capping the zone” was developed by the department with the help of legislators, sportsmen and outfitters. This “capping the zone” is an allocation formula to distribute Elk tags to hunters (residents, nonresidents and outfitted residents) based on the historical use of the previous 5 years. What has been your experience with this management strategy? (Please circle one response for each question)

A. Do you hunt in a capped zone?	YES	No
B. Has “capping a zone” affected where you hunt?	YES	No
C. Has “capping a zone” caused you to change the zone you hunt in?	YES	No



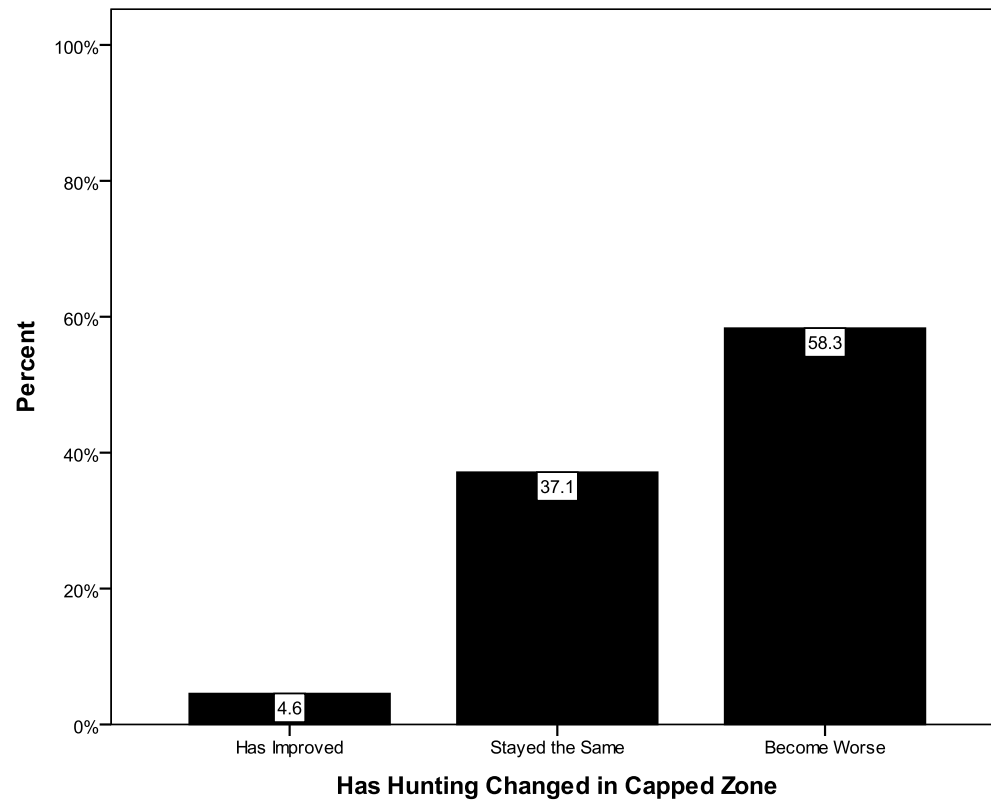
Q25: Almost half of the Elk hunters have experience hunting in a capped zone. Generally, capping has not had much affect on hunting behavior. Less than one-fourth reported that “capping a zone” has affected where they hunt. Only 15% said that “capping a zone” caused them to change the zone they hunt in.

26. If you hunt in a “capped zone” has the Elk hunting changed since it was capped? (Please check one response)

ELK HUNTING HAS IMPROVED.

ELK HUNTING HAS STAYED THE SAME.

ELK HUNTING HAS BECOME WORSE.



□ Q26: Even though 85% said “capping a zone” had not affected where they hunt, a majority of hunters (60%) felt that Elk hunting has become worse since the zone they hunt in was “capped.”

ELK HUNTING PREFERENCES AND MOTIVATIONS

In this section we seek an understanding of what you consider when deciding what kind of Elk to hunt and where to hunt them.

27. How desirable is it to you to harvest the following kinds of Elk?

KIND OF ELK

A. Large Bull
(greater than 350 Boone & Crockett points)

B. Mature Bull (6 points a side)

C. Raghorn Bull (4-5 points a side)

D. Spike Elk

E. Cow Elk

F. Calf

G. Any Elk

How desirable do you find harvesting each kind of Elk?

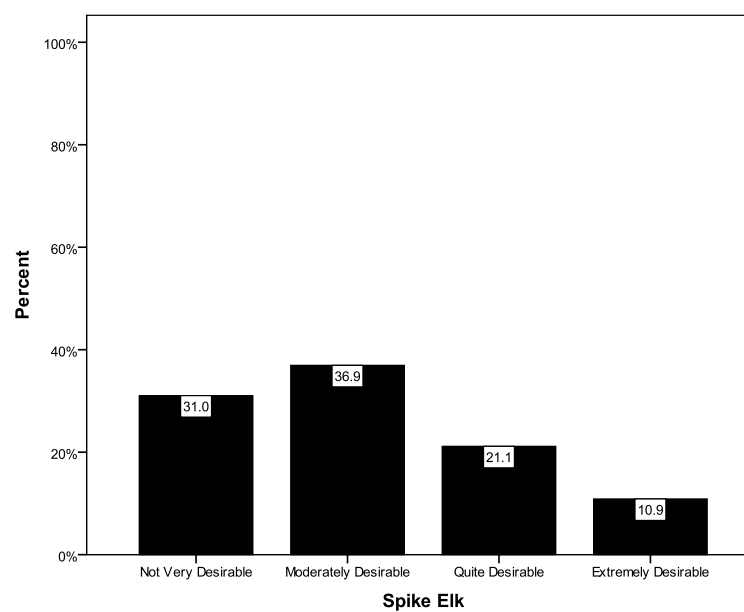
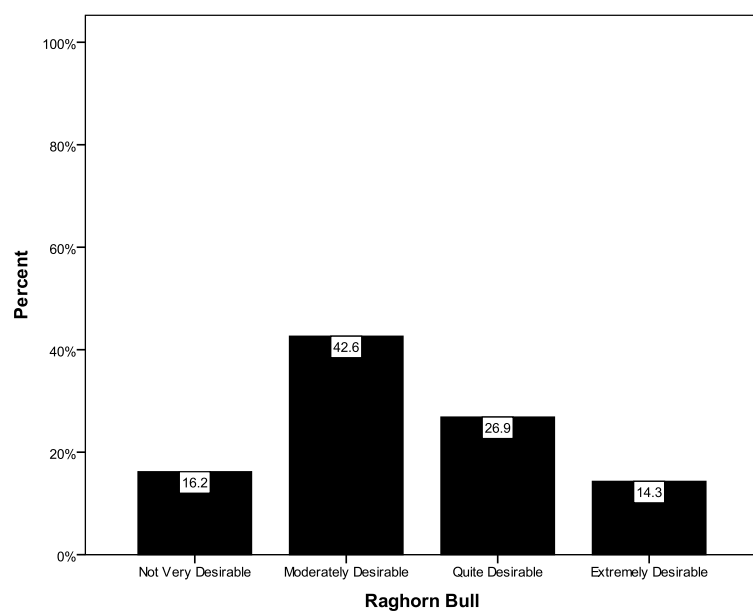
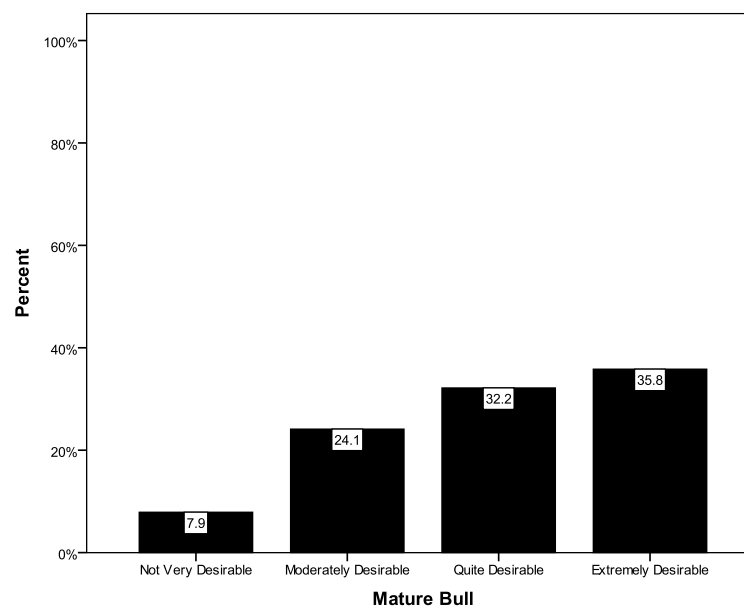
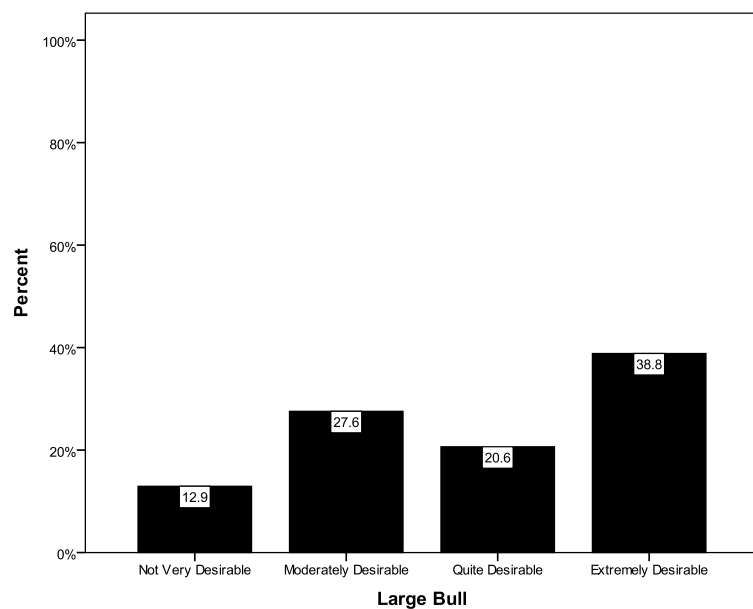
(Please circle one response for each kind of Elk)

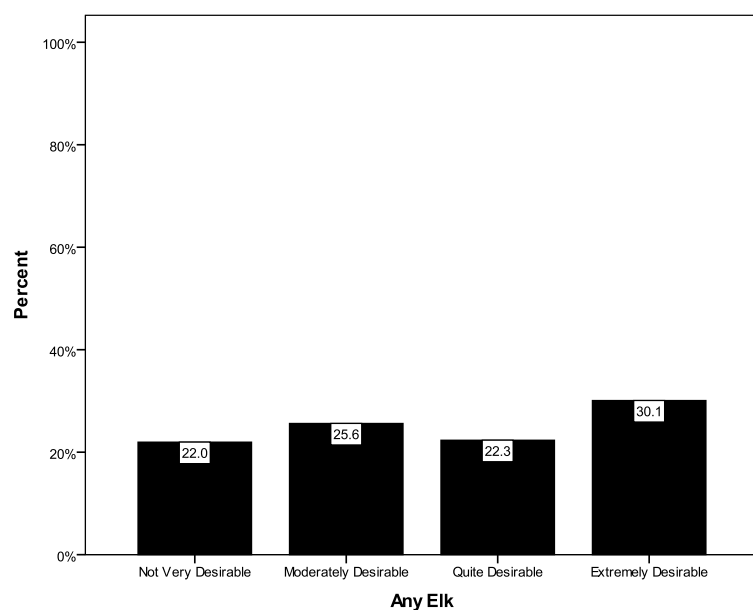
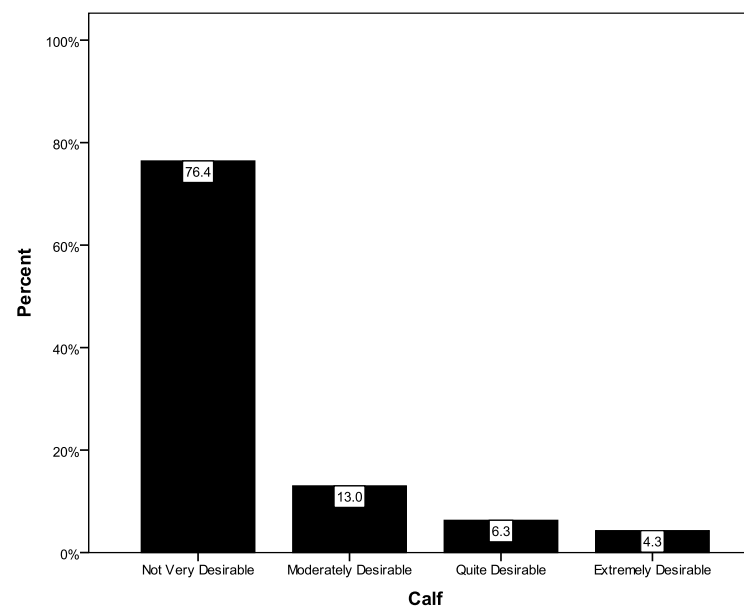
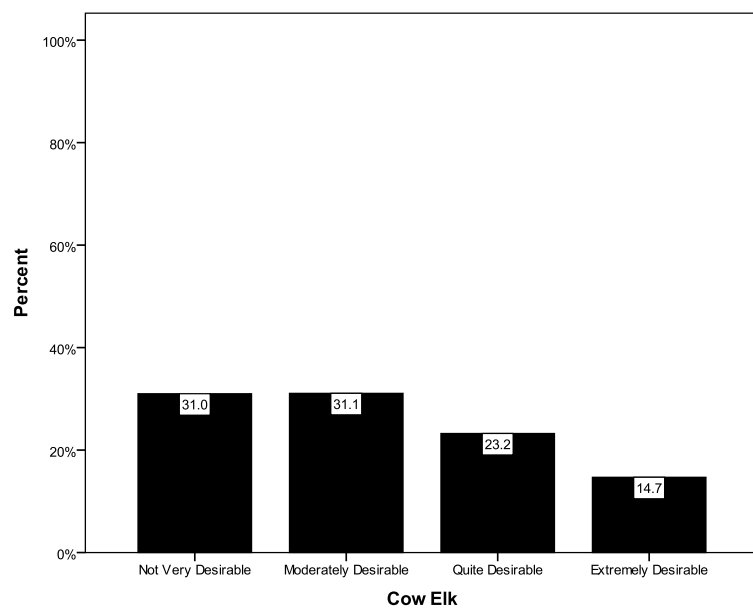
NOT VERY
DESIRABLE

MODERATELY
DESIRABLE

QUITE
DESIRABLE

EXTREMELY
DESIRABLE





Q27: Hunters reported that harvesting a mature bull (6 points a side) or a large bull (greater than 350 Boone & Crockett points) was most desirable. These were followed by “any Elk,” a raghorn bull (4-5 points a side), a cow Elk or a spike Elk, which were moderately desirable. Harvesting a calf was not very desirable.

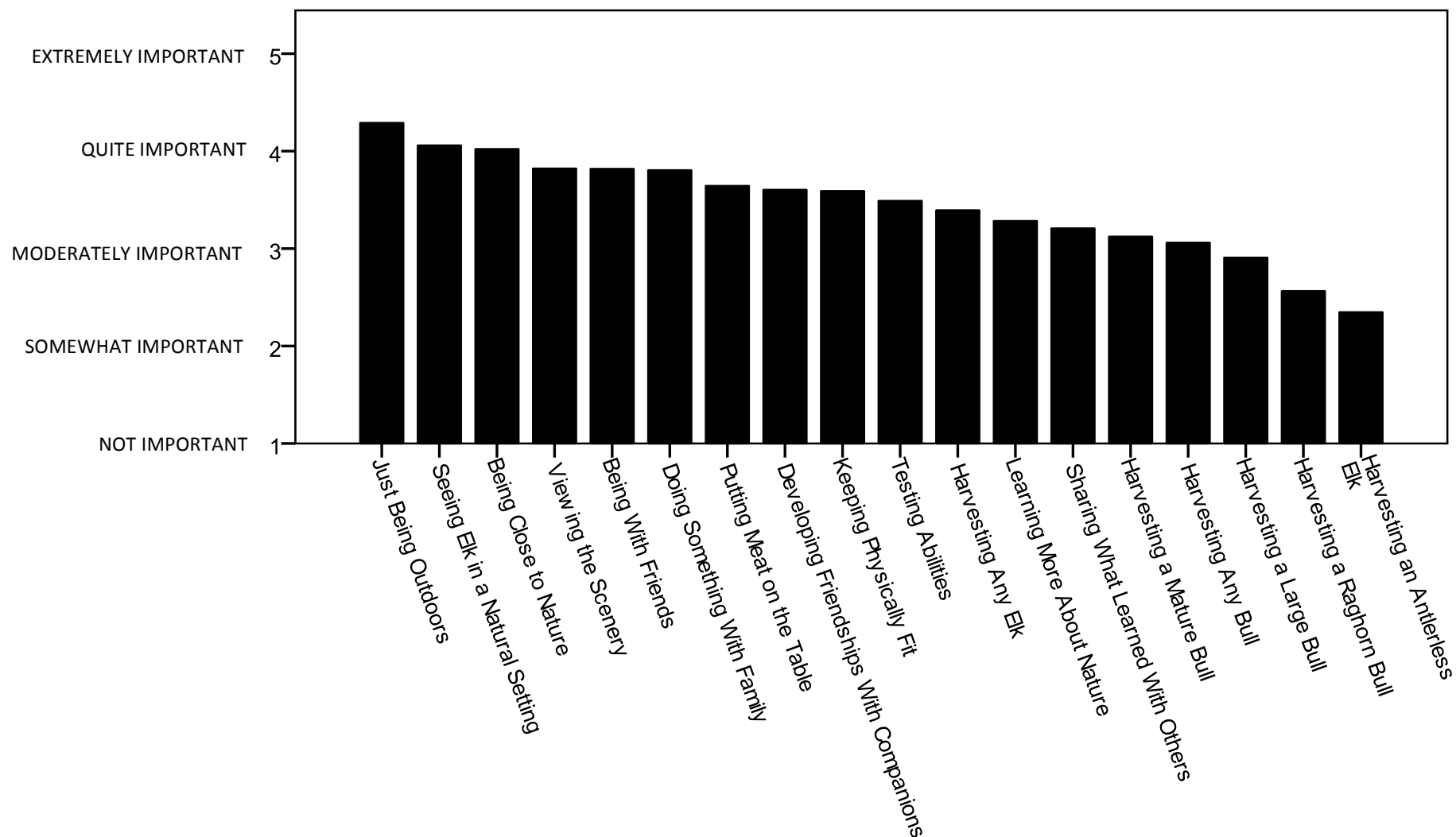
28. Below is a list of possible reasons for hunting Elk in Idaho. How important to you is each of the following reasons for hunting Elk in Idaho?

REASONS FOR HUNTING

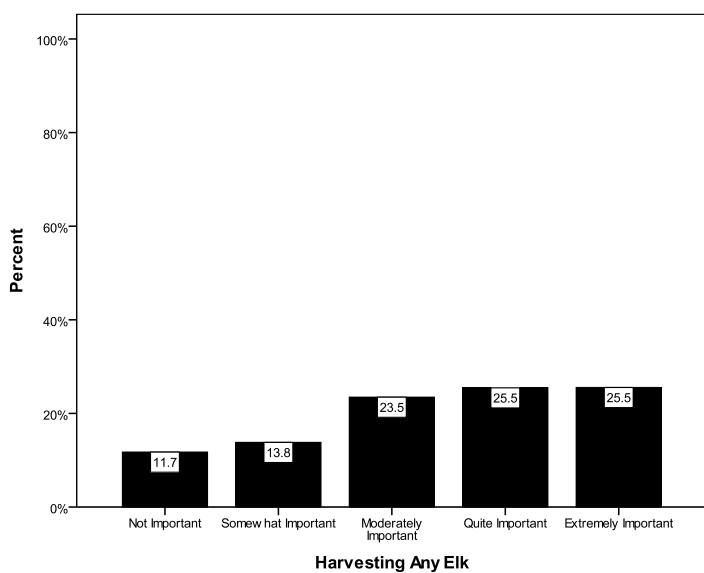
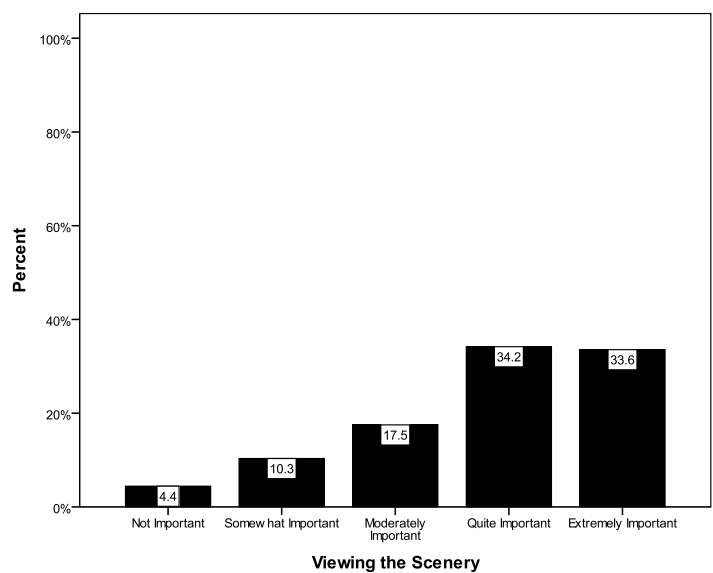
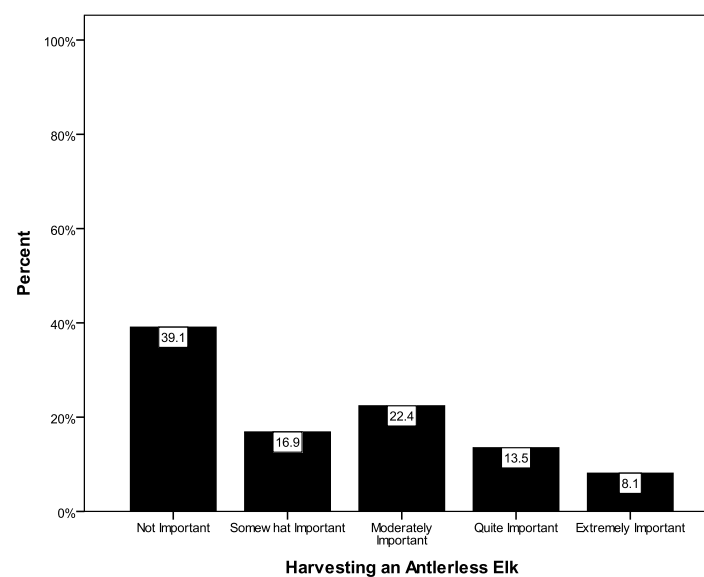
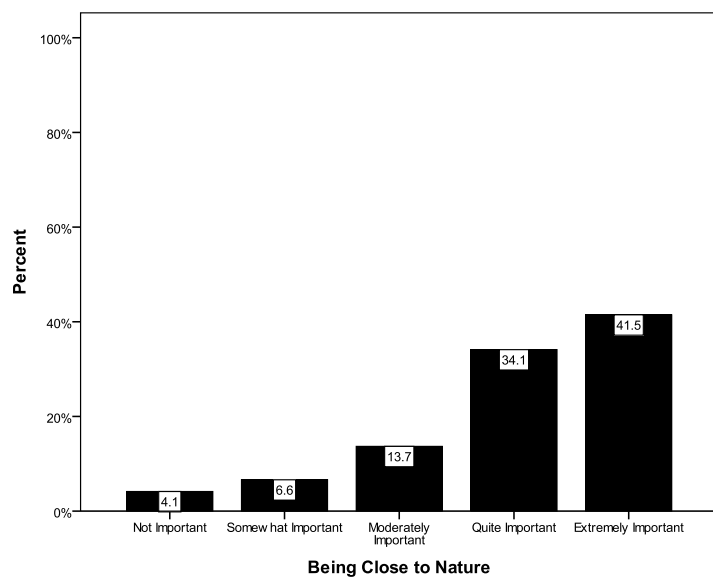
- A. Being close to nature.
- B. Harvesting an antlerless Elk.
- C. Viewing the scenery.
- D. Harvesting any Elk.
- E. Seeing Elk in a natural setting.
- F. Testing my abilities.
- G. Harvesting a large bull. (*greater than 350 Boone & Crockett points*)
- H. Sharing what I have learned with others.
- I. Being with friends.
- J. Harvesting a raghorn bull. (*4 or 5 points on a side*)
- K. Learning more about nature.
- L. Doing something with my family.
- M. Putting meat on the table.
- N. Keeping physically fit.
- O. Harvesting any bull.
- P. Developing close friendship with my hunting companions.
- Q. Harvesting a mature bull. (*6 points on a side*)
- R. Just being outdoors.

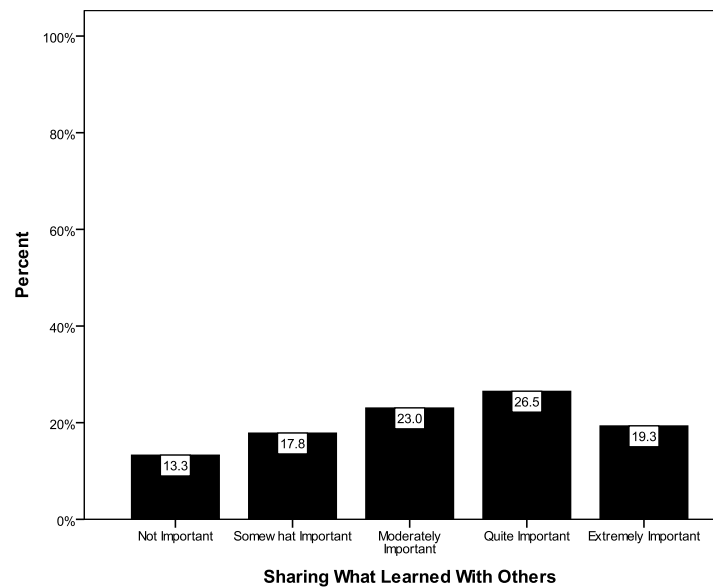
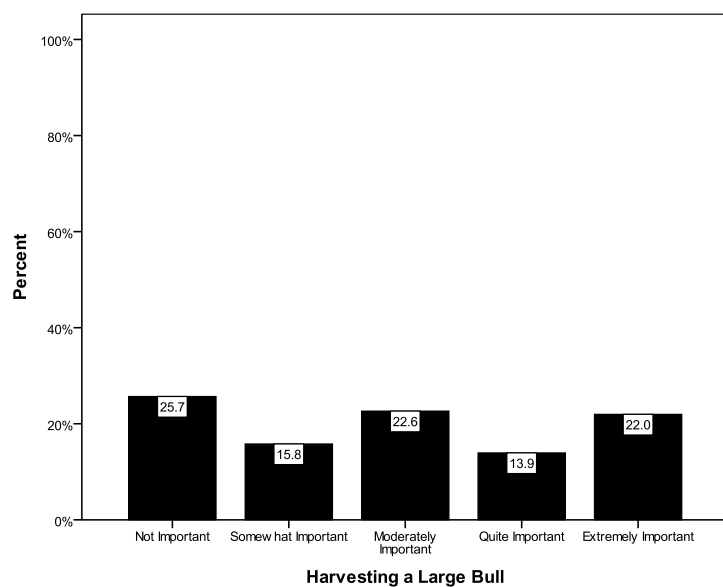
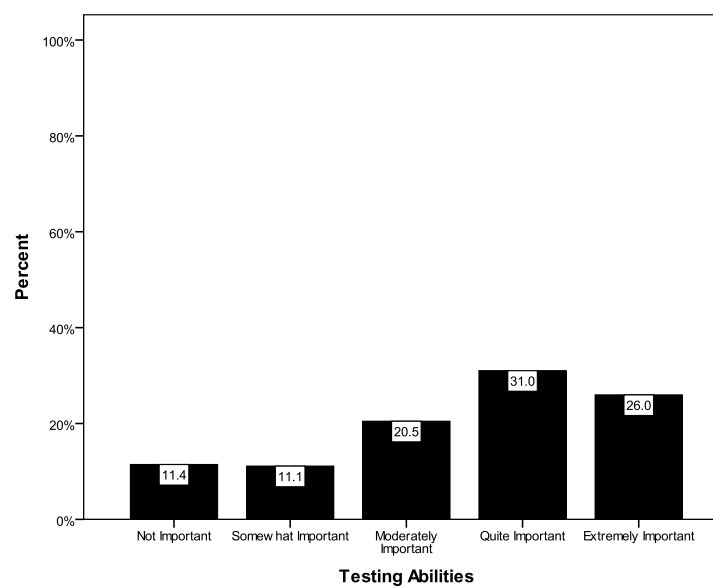
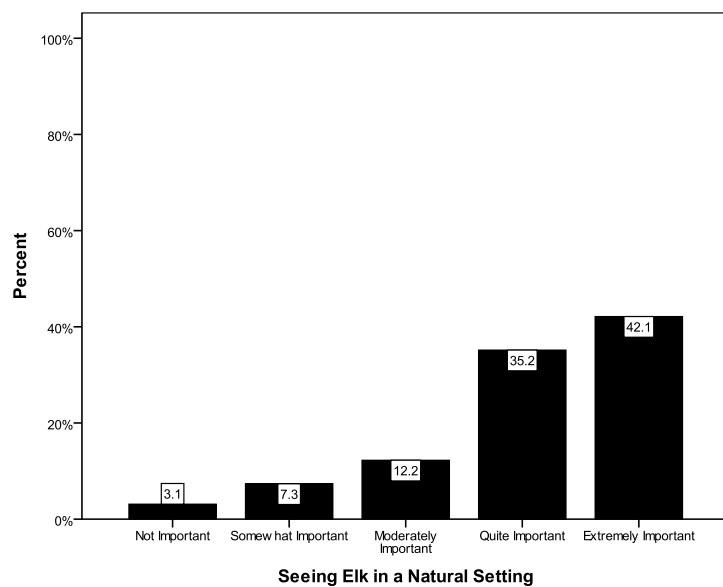
How important is each reason for hunting Elk in Idaho?
(Please circle one response for each reason)

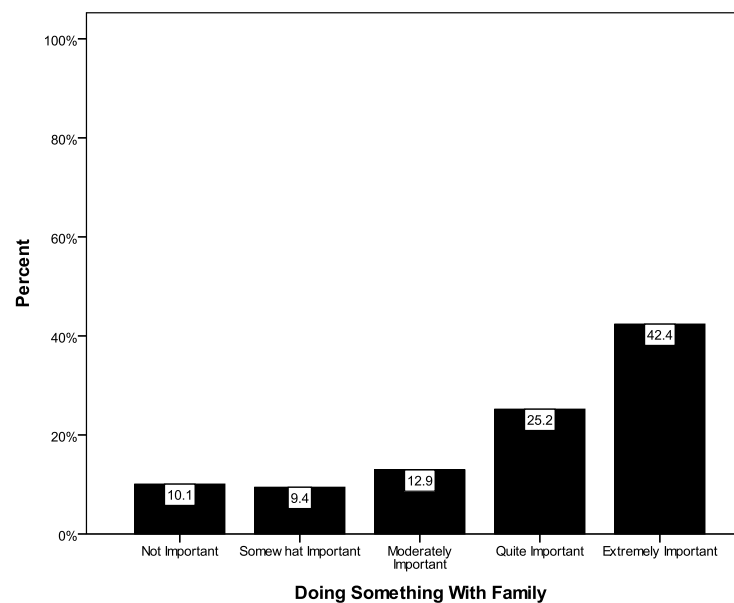
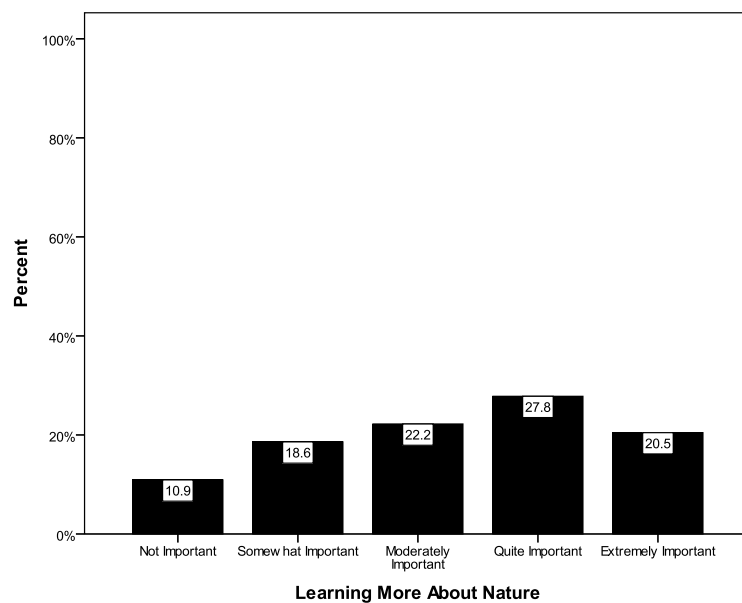
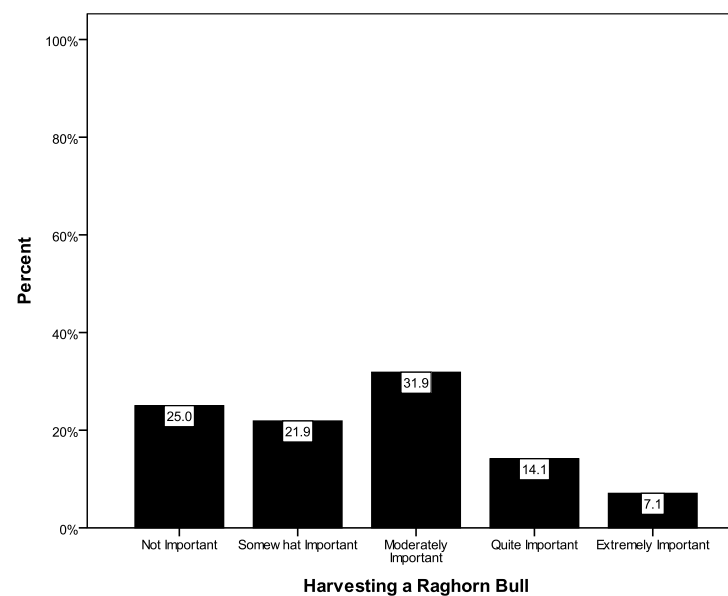
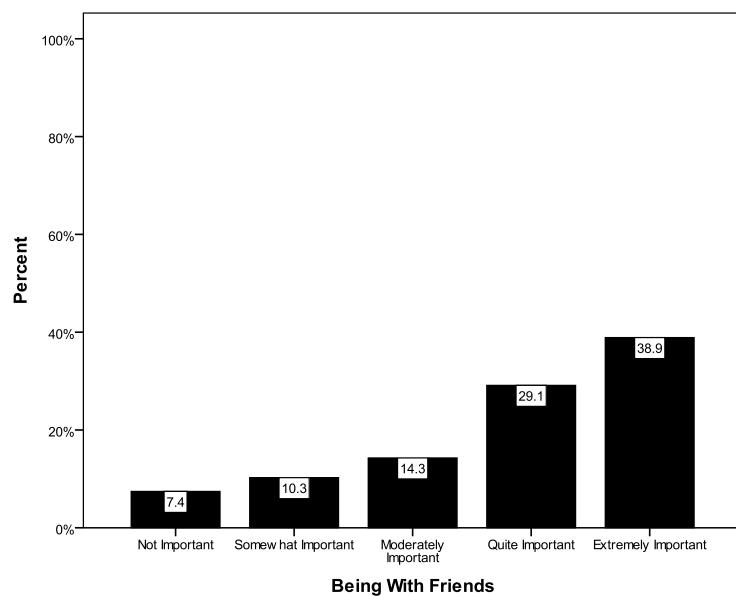
NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	QUITE IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
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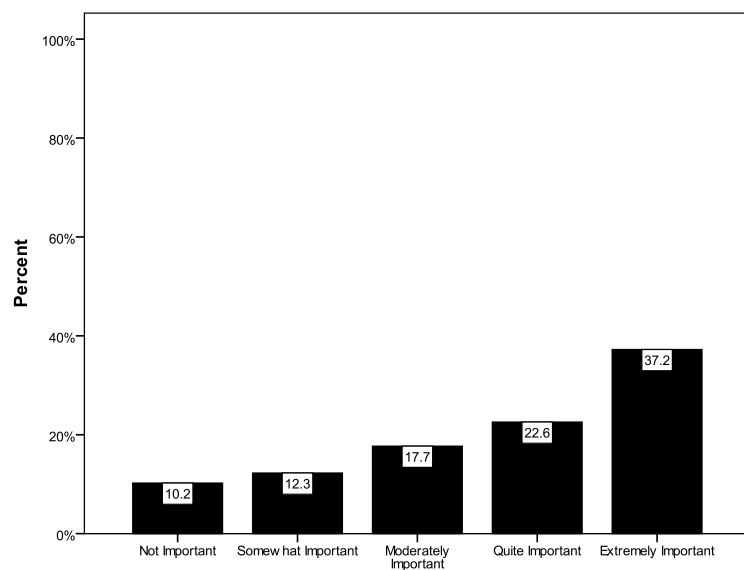
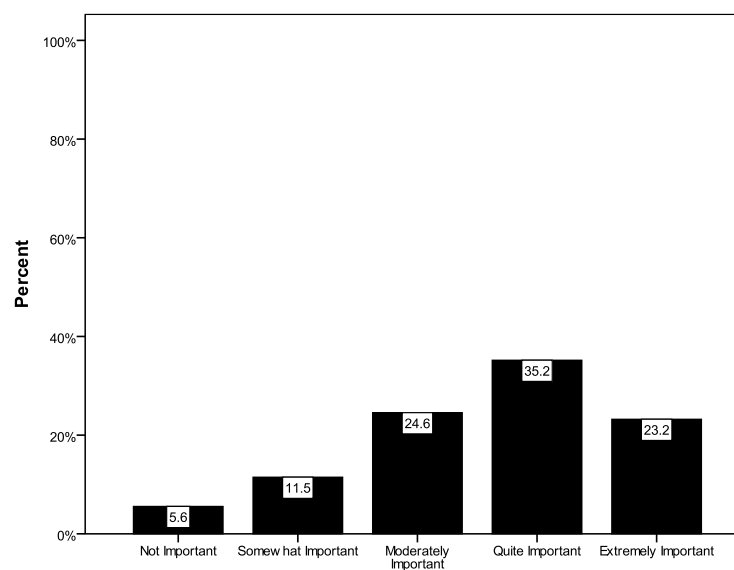
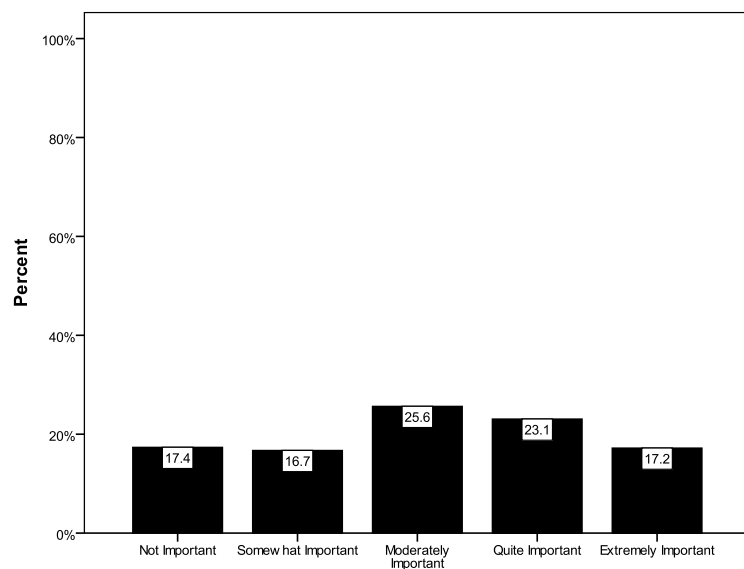
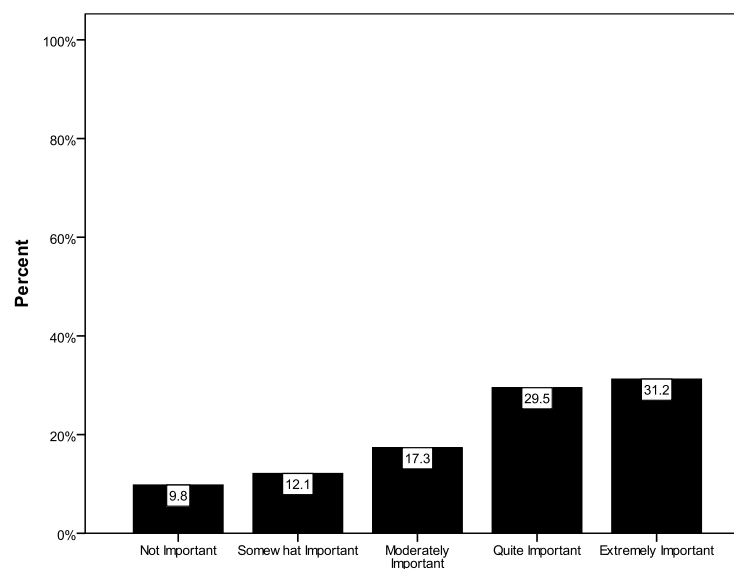


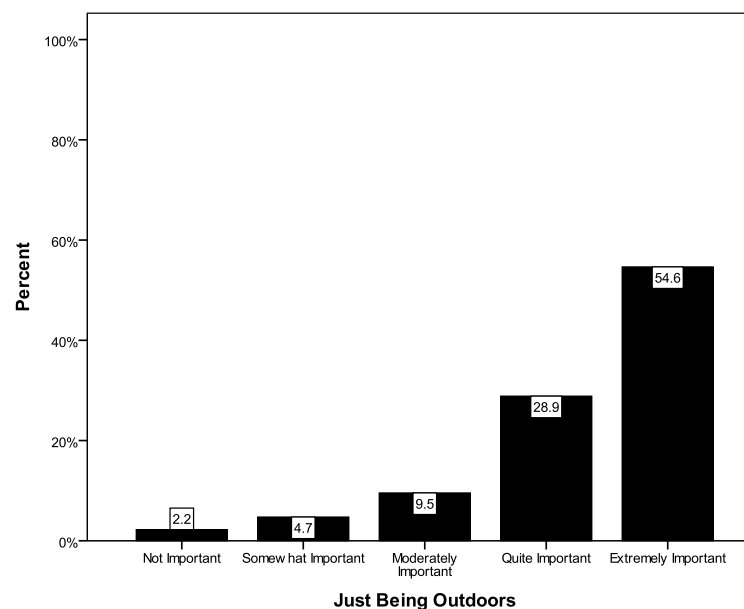
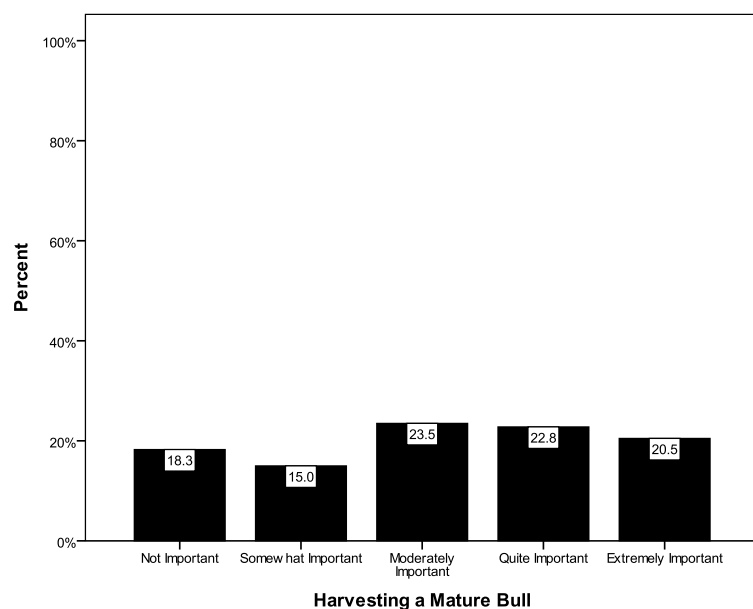
IMPORTANCE OF REASONS FOR HUNTING ELK IN IDAHO







**Putting Meat on the Table****Keeping Physically Fit****Harvesting Any Bull****Developing Friendships With Companions**

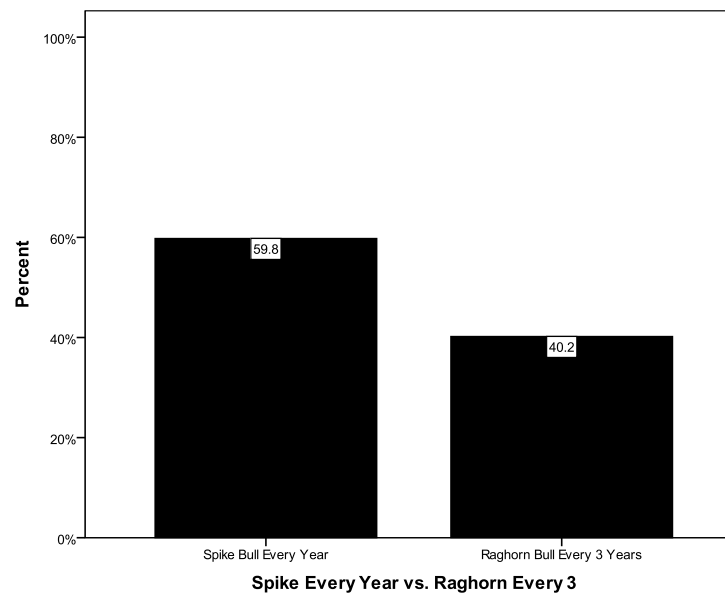
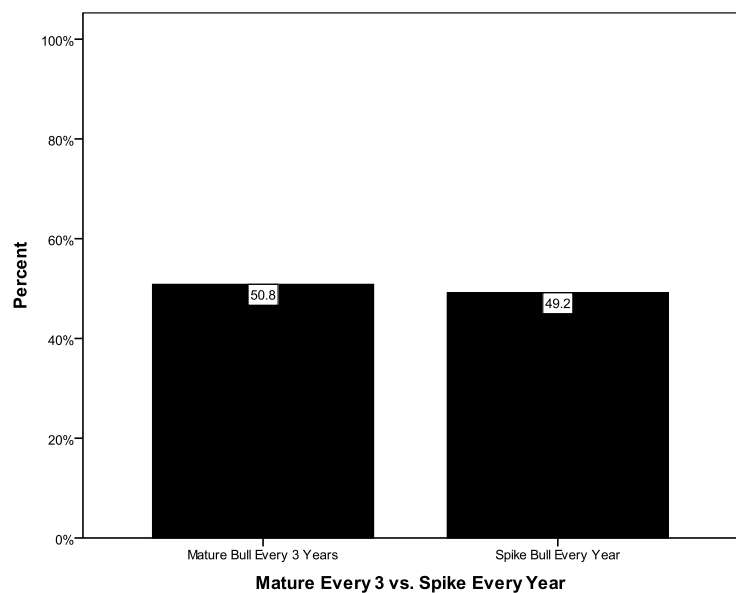
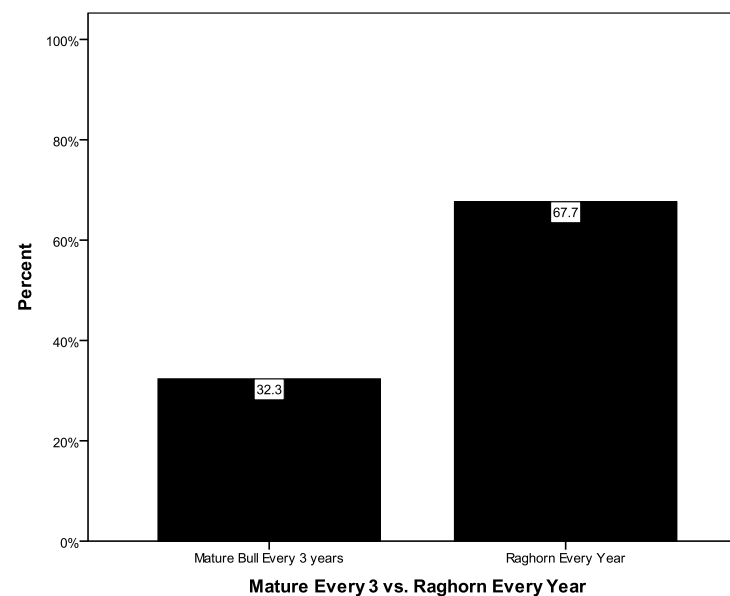
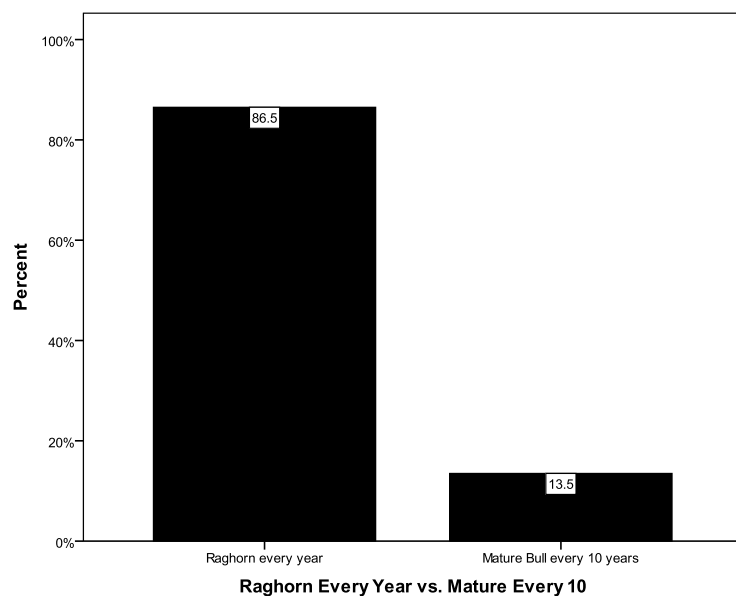


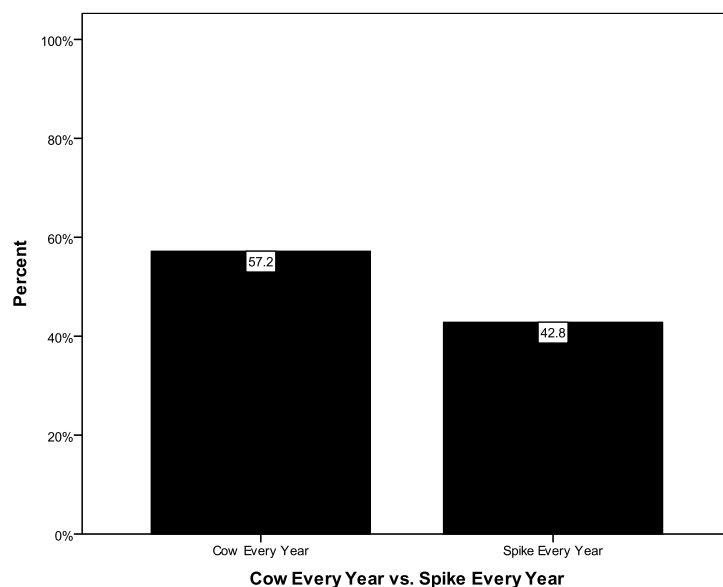
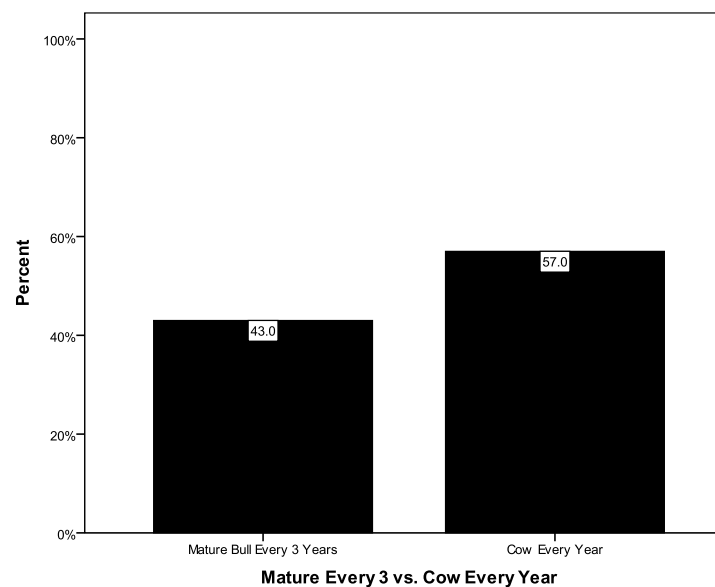
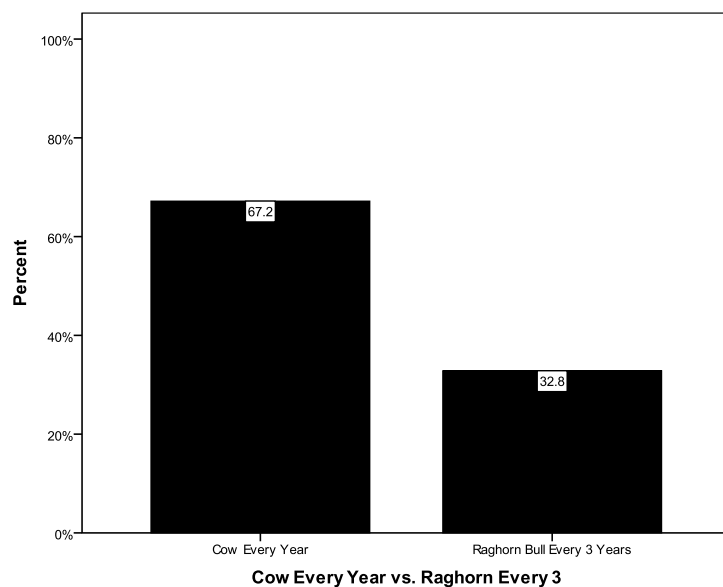
□ **Q28:** When asked how important various reasons were to them for hunting Elk, the top six reasons were “just being outdoors,” “seeing Elk in a natural setting,” “being close to nature,” “viewing scenery,” “being with friends,” and “doing something with my family.” The motivations associated with harvesting Elk were of less importance than these reasons that describe being immersed in the natural setting.

Next, your opinions about some possible management options.

32. Managing to produce more large bull Elk would require reductions in bull harvest. Managers need to know whether hunters are willing make trade-offs between the size of bulls and the amount of opportunity to hunt. (For each of the following pairs of opportunity choices please indicate which one is most favorable to you by circling the appropriate letter) Please answer every one, even if you do not like either option.

The opportunity to hunt for a raghorn bull (4 or 5 points a side) every year	OR	The opportunity to hunt for a mature bull (6+ points a side) once every 10 years
The opportunity to hunt for a mature bull (6+ points a side) once every 3 years	OR	The opportunity to hunt for a raghorn bull (4-5 points a side) every year
The opportunity to hunt for a mature bull (6+ points a side) once every 3 years	OR	The opportunity to hunt for a spike bull every year
The opportunity to hunt for a spike bull every year	OR	The opportunity to hunt for a raghorn bull (4 or 5 points a side) once every 3 years
The opportunity to hunt for a cow Elk every year	OR	The opportunity to hunt for a raghorn bull (4 or 5 points a side) once every 3 years
The opportunity to hunt for a mature bull (6+ points a side) once every 3 years	OR	The opportunity to hunt for a cow Elk every year
The opportunity to hunt for a cow Elk every year	OR	The opportunity to hunt for a spike bull every year





Q32: In almost every case, Idaho Elk hunters prefer to preserve the amount of opportunity to hunt over hunting for large size bull Elk less frequently. This closely parallels the findings about a quality Elk hunting experience in which being able to hunt for Elk every year was ranked 1st, while being able to hunt for mature bulls was ranked 5th.

ACCEPTABILITY OF CURRENT AND PROPOSED MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND THE TRADE-OFFS INVOLVED

34. How do you feel about each of the following potential ways of improving Elk hunting, if needed?

POTENTIAL MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

How do you feel about the following
potential ways of Elk hunting?
(Please circle one response for each option)

A. Longer Seasons.

FAVOR IT

DO NOT FAVOR,
BUT ACCEPTABLE

NOT
ACCEPTABLE

NEED MORE
INFORMATION

B. Choose only one weapon
(archery, muzzleloader, rifle).

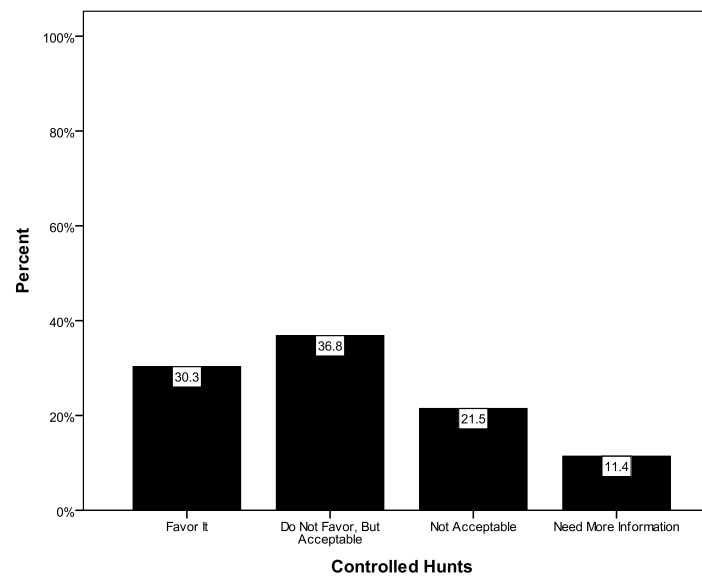
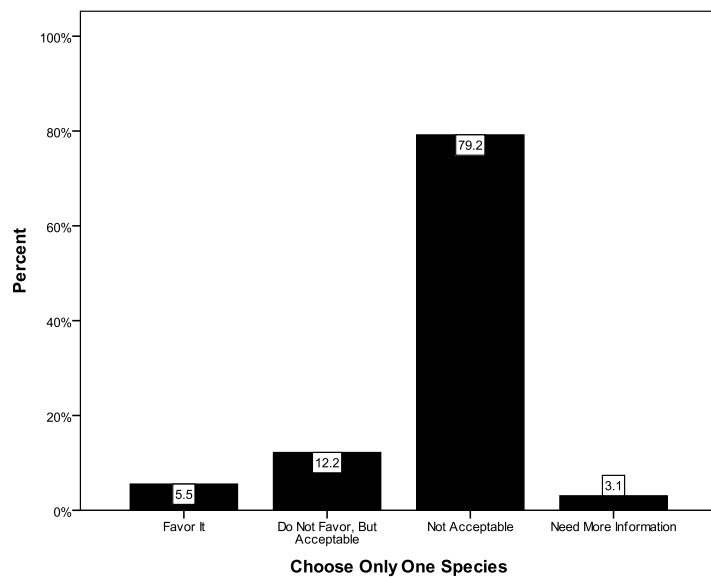
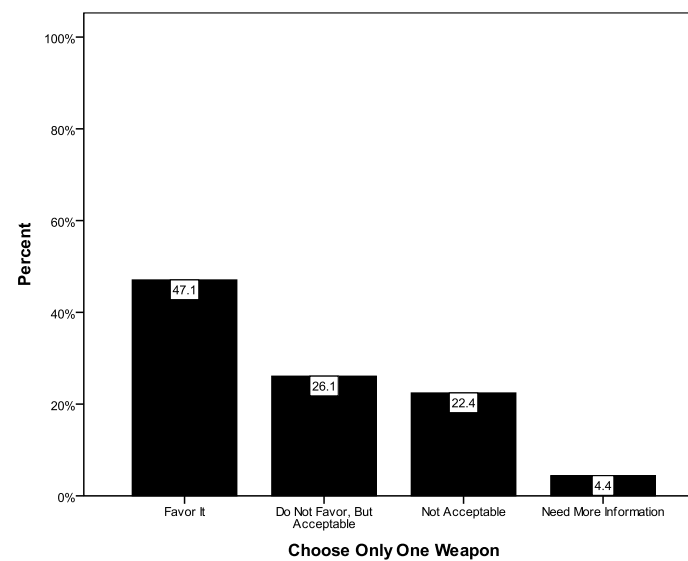
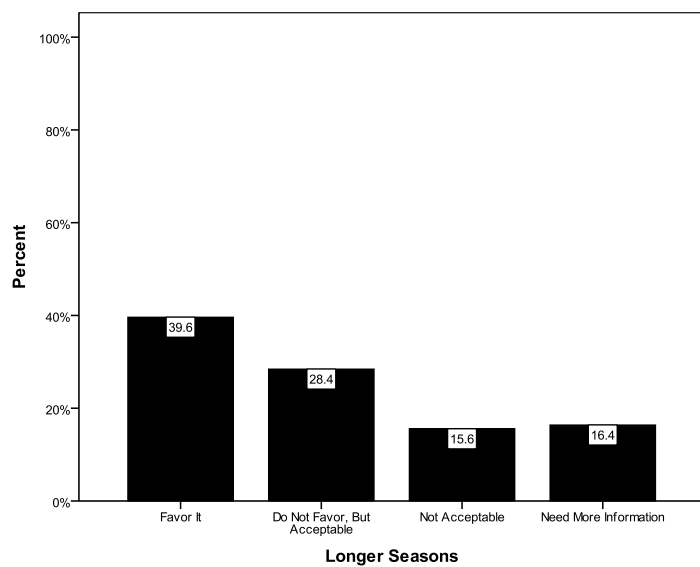
C. Choose only one species--Deer or
Elk.

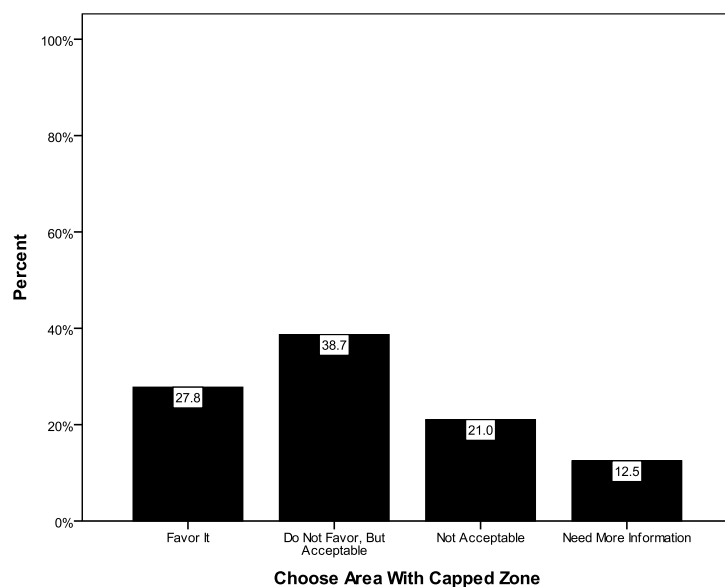
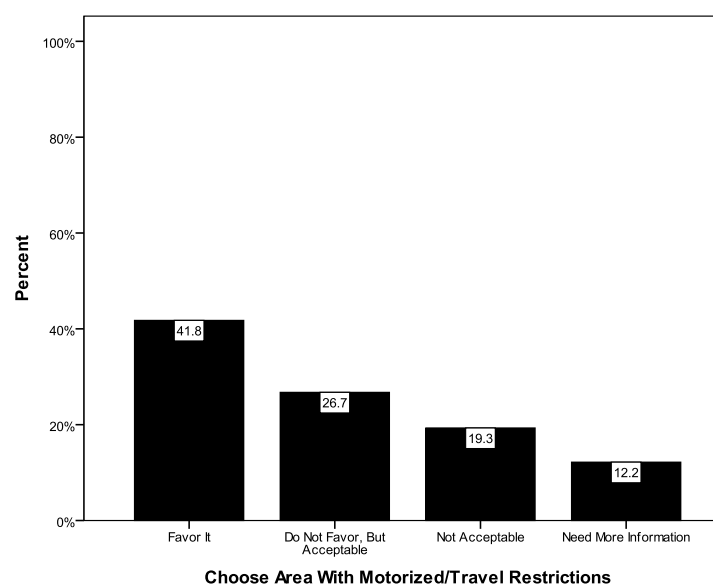
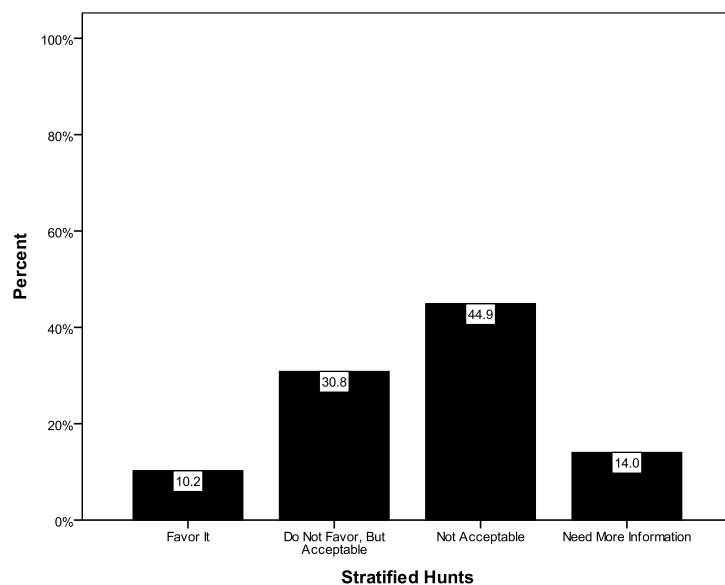
D. Controlled hunts.

E. Stratified hunts (a choice of one of
several short seasons (example 5-7
days)).

F. Choose an area with the
Motorized Hunting Rule or other
travel restrictions.

G. Choose an area with a capped
zone (limited first-come, first-
served).





Q34: Elk hunters generally favored five of seven potential ways to improve Elk hunting, if needed. The most favorable or acceptable (73.3%) was to choose only one weapon such as archery, muzzleloader, or rifle. A clear majority (from 70% to 67%) favored or accepted four other potential actions (choose an area with Motorized Hunting Rule or other travel restrictions; longer seasons; controlled hunts; and choosing an area with a capped zone). Stratified hunts or choosing only one species—Deer or Elk were favorable or acceptable to only 41% and 18%, respectively.

35. We would like to know how you feel about the following potential restrictions to increase the quality and size of Elk in Idaho and improve Elk hunting opportunities. Please indicate your opinion on the following potential restrictions.

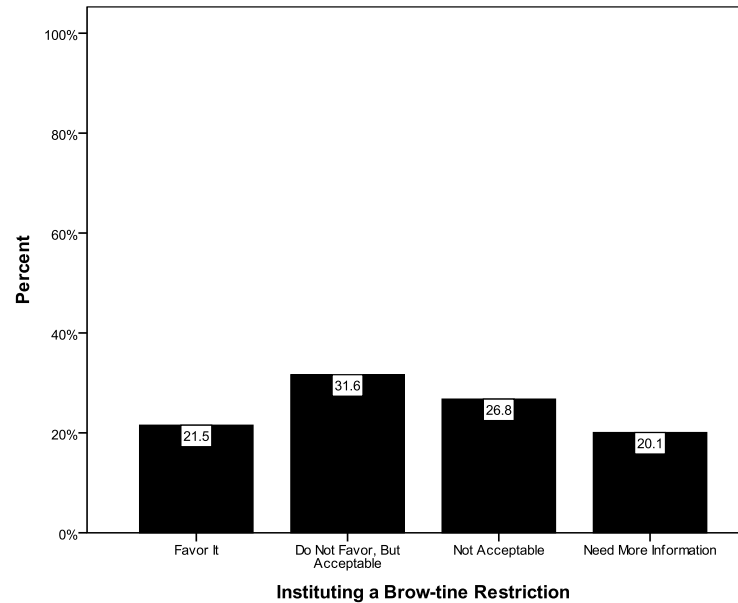
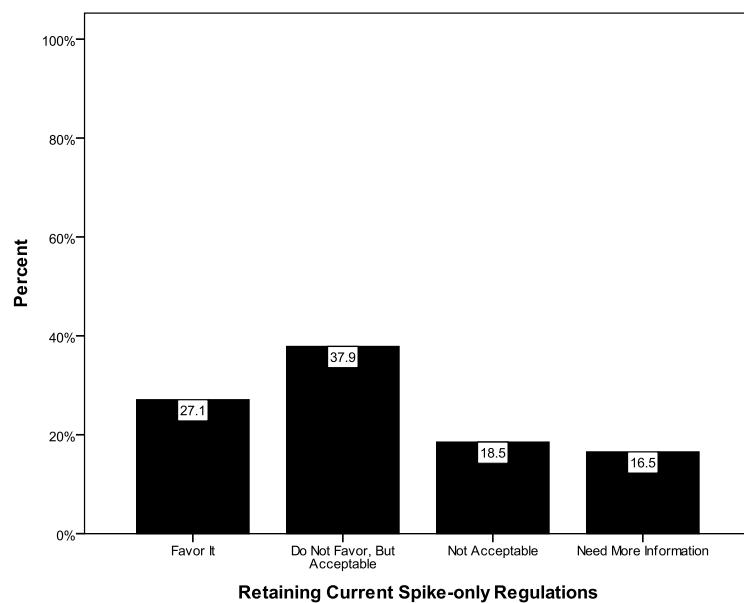
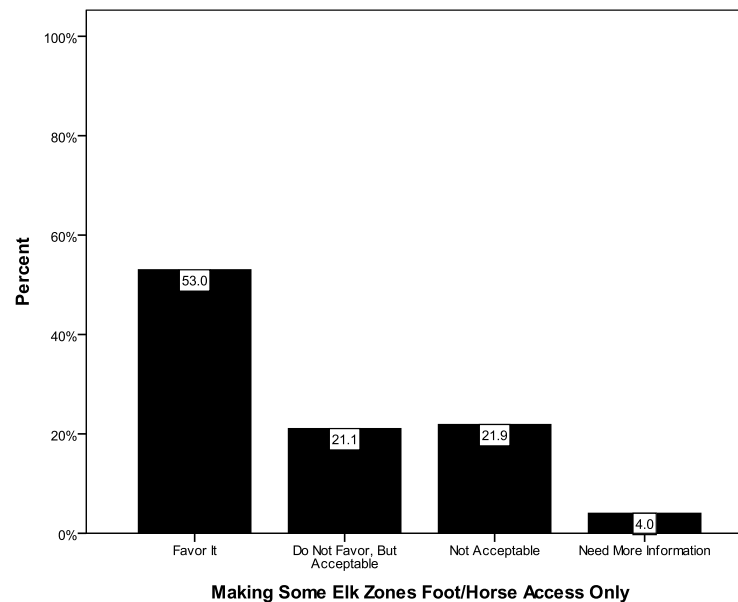
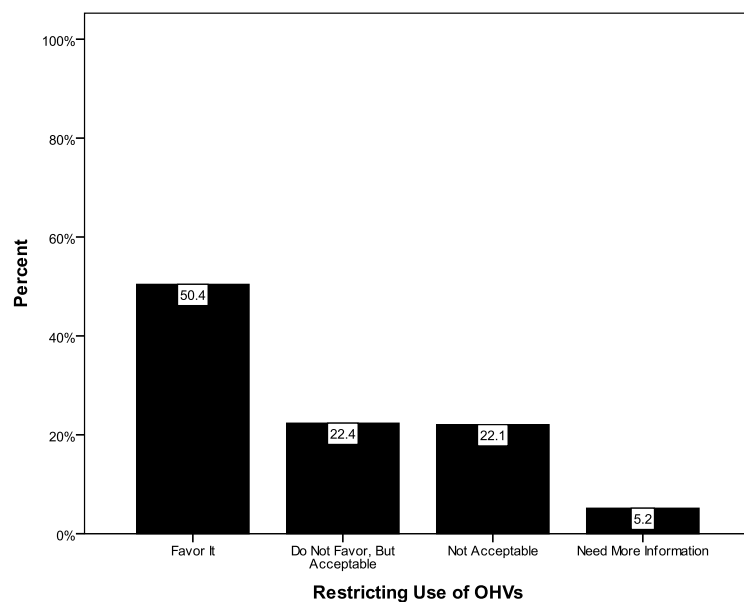
POTENTIAL RESTRICTIONS

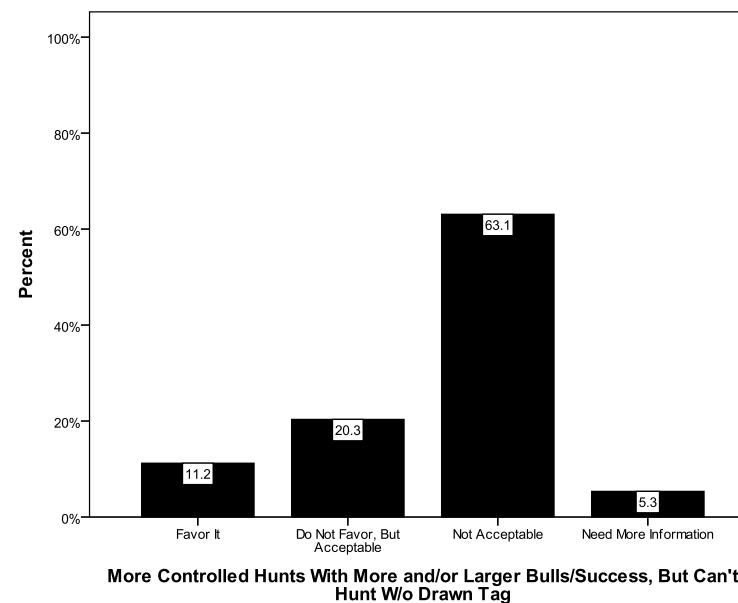
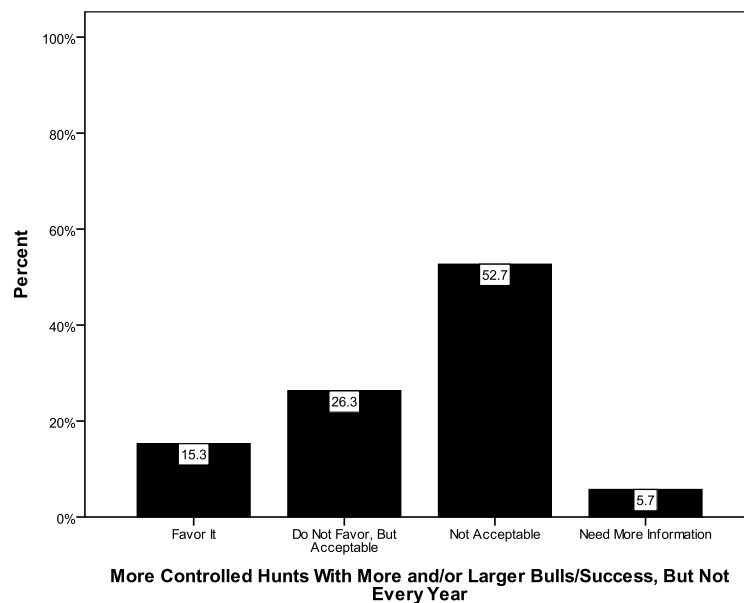
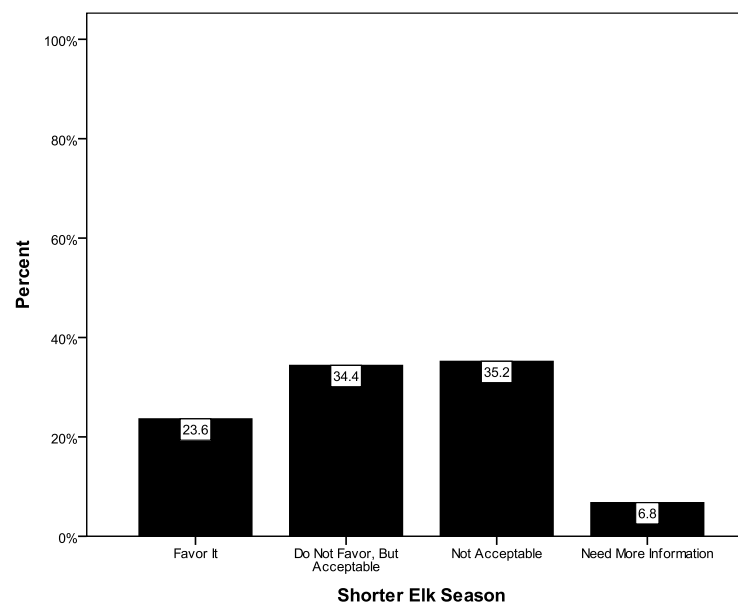
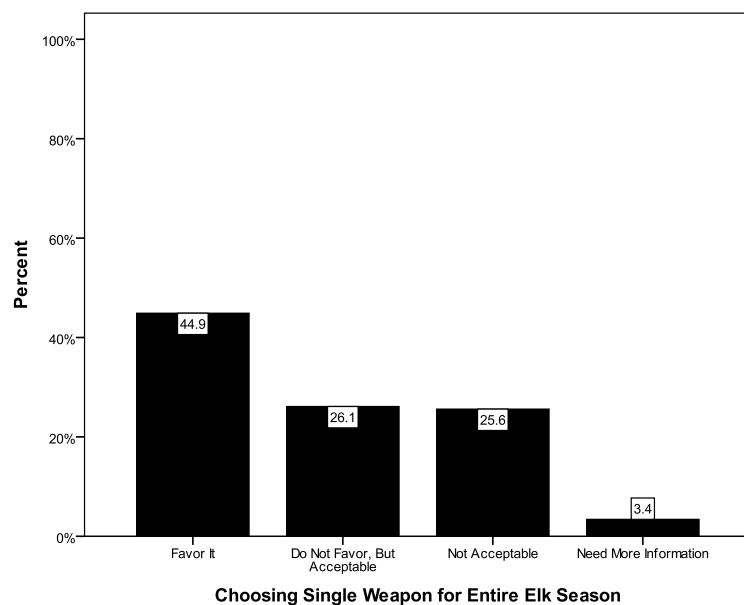
How you feel about the following potential restrictions?

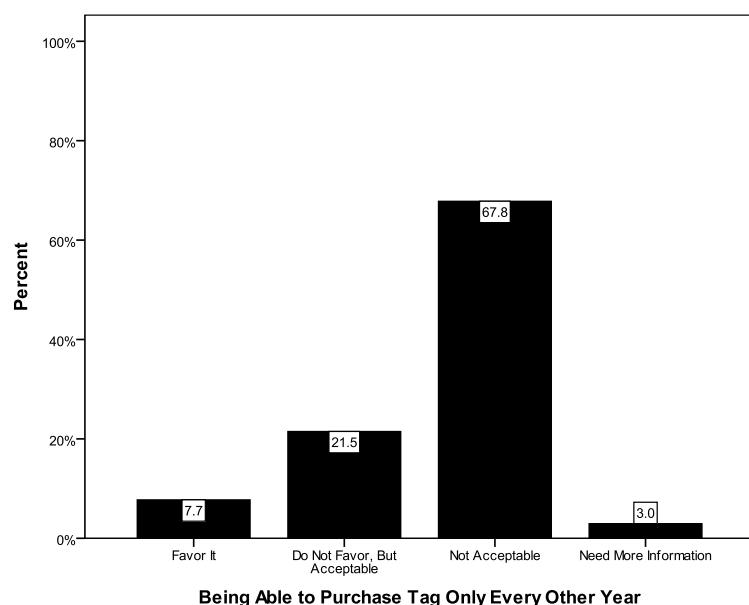
(Please check one response for each restriction)

- A. Restricting the use of OHVs.
- B. Making some Elk zones foot and horse access only.
- C. Retaining the current spike-only regulations.
- D. Instituting a brow-tine restriction.
- E. Choosing a single weapon for the entire Elk season.
- F. A shorter Elk season (*less than 10 days,*) but being able to hunt Elk every year.
- G. More controlled hunts that provide more and/or larger bulls and higher harvest success, but not being able to hunt Elk every year.

FAVOR IT	DO NOT FAVOR, BUT ACCEPTABLE	NOT ACCEPTABLE	NEED MORE INFORMATION
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□ **Q35: A majority of Elk hunters clearly found four potential restrictions to increase the quality and size of Elk in Idaho and to improve Elk hunting opportunities to be favorable or acceptable; two were somewhat favorable, and three were clearly unacceptable. Over 70% favored making some Elk zones foot and horse access only, restricting the use of OHVs, and choosing a single weapon for the entire Elk season. There was less support (from 65% to 53%) for retaining the current spike-only regulations, a shorter Elk season but being able to hunt Elk every year, and instituting a brow-tine restriction.**

A clear majority (from 68% to 53%) found it unacceptable being able to purchase an Elk tag only every other year, more controlled hunts that provide larger animals but not being able to hunt Elk every year, and more controlled hunts but not being able to hunt Elk every year if you did not draw a tag.

36. IF Idaho Fish and Game introduces restrictions that reduce Elk hunting opportunities to improve Elk populations, how would your hunting behavior change?

CHANGES TO YOUR HUNTING

A. I would hunt in different zones.

B. I would quit hunting Elk.

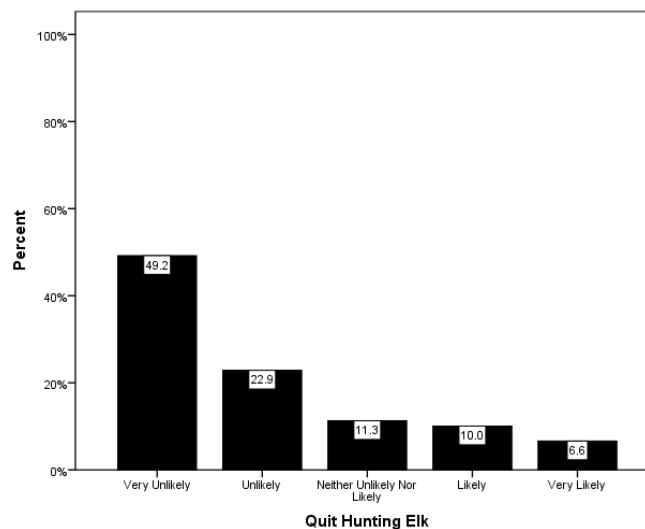
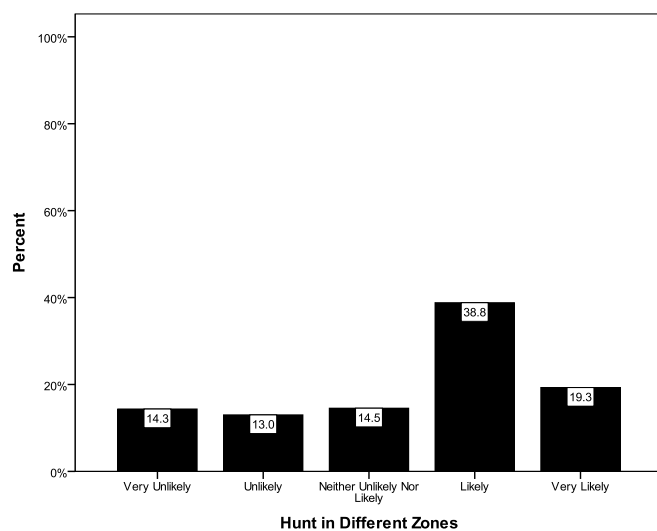
C. I would shift to hunting other species.

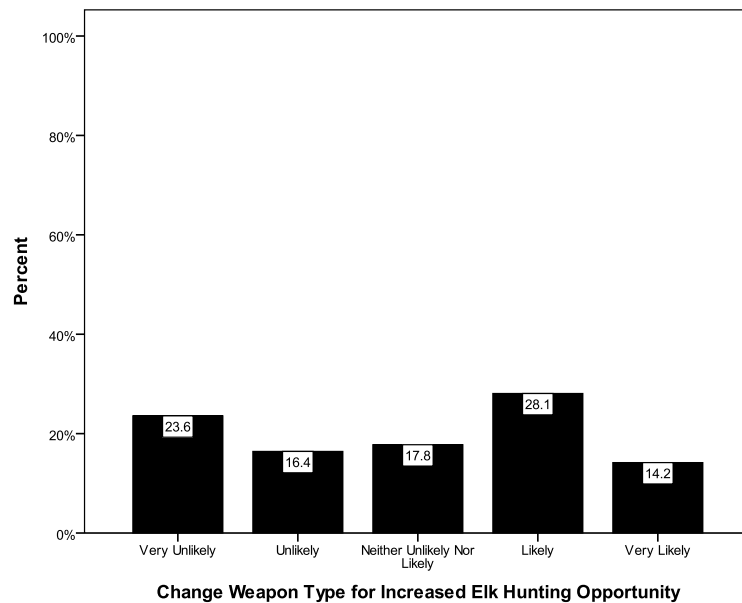
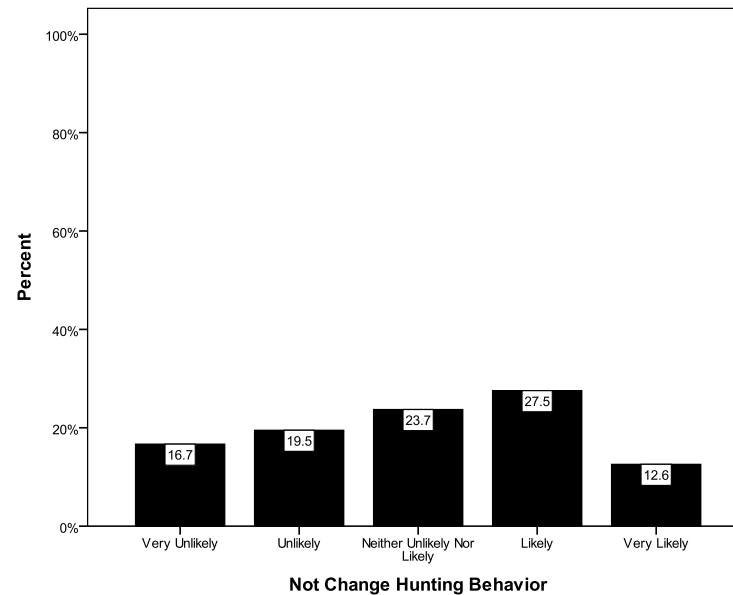
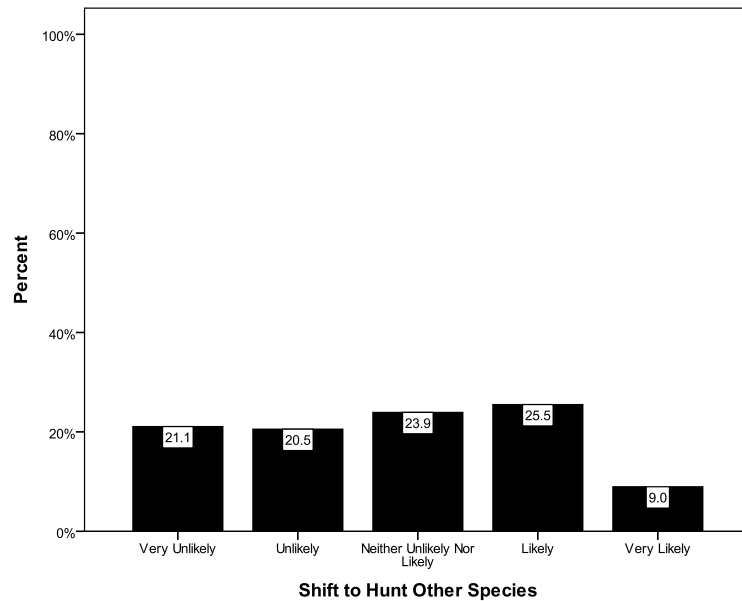
D. I would not change my hunting behavior.

E. I would change my weapon type for increased Elk hunting opportunity.

How likely would you change your behavior?
(Please check one response for each attribute)

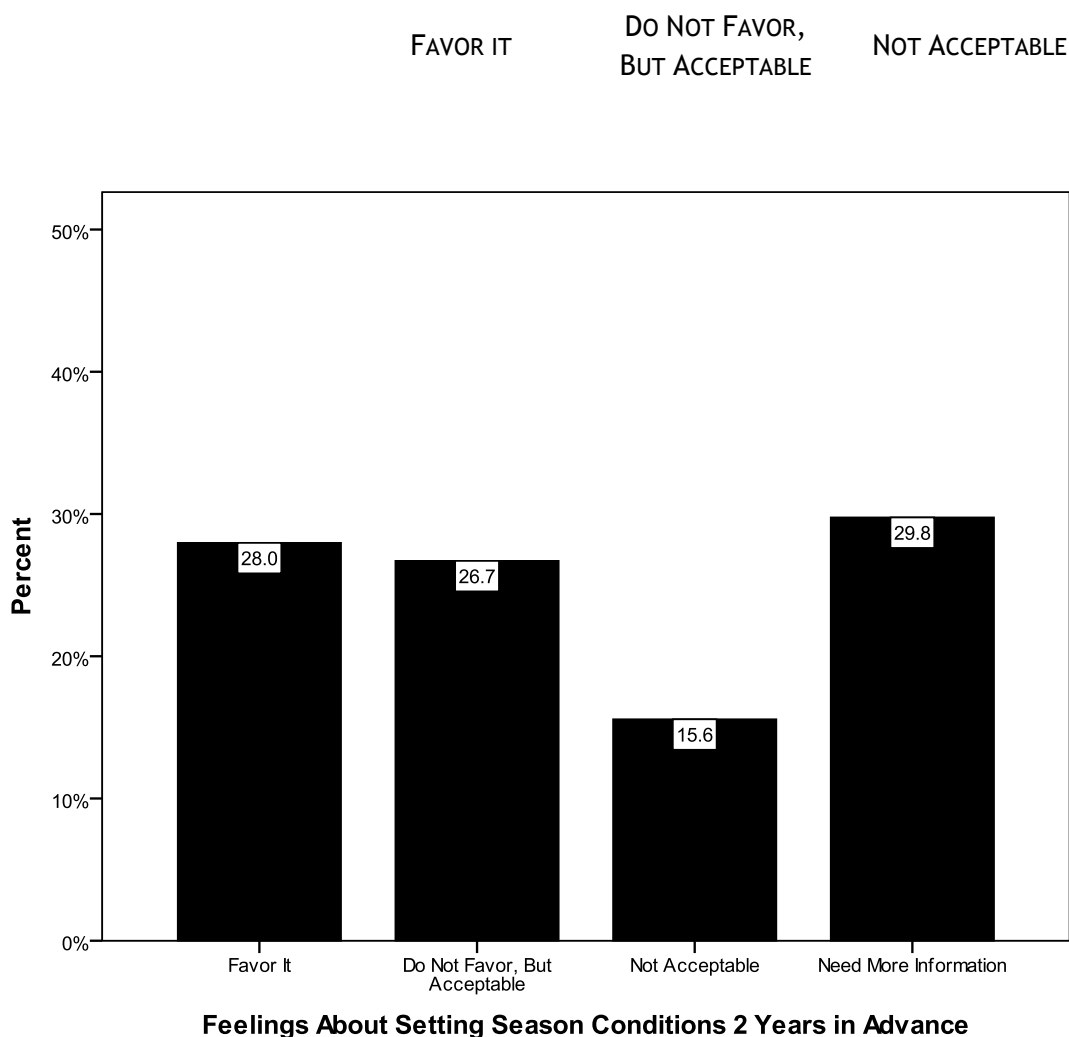
VERY UNLIKELY UNLIKELY NEITHER UNLIKELY NOR LIKELY LIKELY VERY LIKELY





Q36: 72% of the Elk hunters said that that it was unlikely or very unlikely that they would quit hunting Elk if IDFG introduces restrictions that reduce Elk hunting opportunities to improve populations. They were pretty evenly split on the other potential changes. Although 41% said it was unlikely they would shift hunting to another species, 35% said it was likely they would do so. Slightly more hunters (42.3%) said they would likely change their weapon type for increased Elk hunting opportunity than those who said they would not likely change their weapon type (40%). Similarly, 40% would likely change their present hunting behavior just for increased Elk hunting opportunity, but 36% would not.

38. How would you feel about a big game regulation that sets the general season conditions for 2 years in advance, just like the current Moose, Mountain Goat, Bighorn Sheep, Upland Game, Turkey and Fishing regulations? (Please check one response)



□ **Q38: A majority (54%) of the Elk hunters feel it would be acceptable to have a big game regulation that sets the general season conditions for 2 years in advance, while it would not be acceptable to 15.6%. It should be noted that almost 30% said that they needed more information.**

WHEN AND WHERE TO HUNT

29. Each of the following characteristics may be things you consider when deciding where to hunt Elk in Idaho. How does each characteristic affect your choice of where to hunt Elk in Idaho?

CHARACTERISTICS

- A. An area with few other Elk hunters.
- B. An area that has many Elk but few mature bulls.
- C. An area where I have hunted Elk for many years.
- D. An area where my family can also hunt Elk with me.
- E. Ability to hunt Elk every year.
- F. An area where I can also hunt deer during the Elk season.
- G. An area close to my home or cabin.
- H. An area with a long Elk season.
- I. An area that is remote and hard to reach.
- J. An area that has an early start to the season.
- K. An area where I have access to public lands (*Forest Service, BLM*).
- L. An area where I also have access to private lands.

How does each characteristic affect where you decide to hunt Elk in Idaho?

(Please circle one response for each characteristic)

NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	QUITE IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
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CHARACTERISTICS

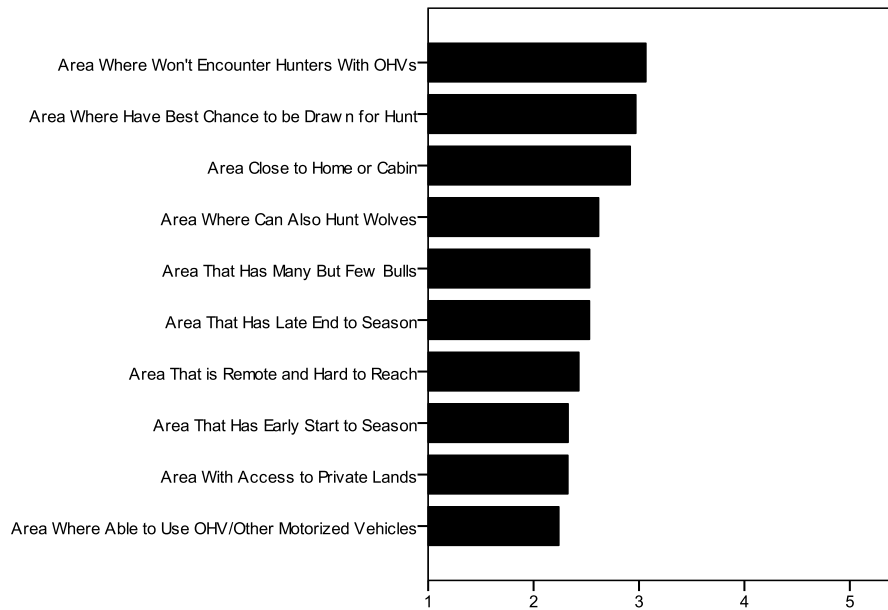
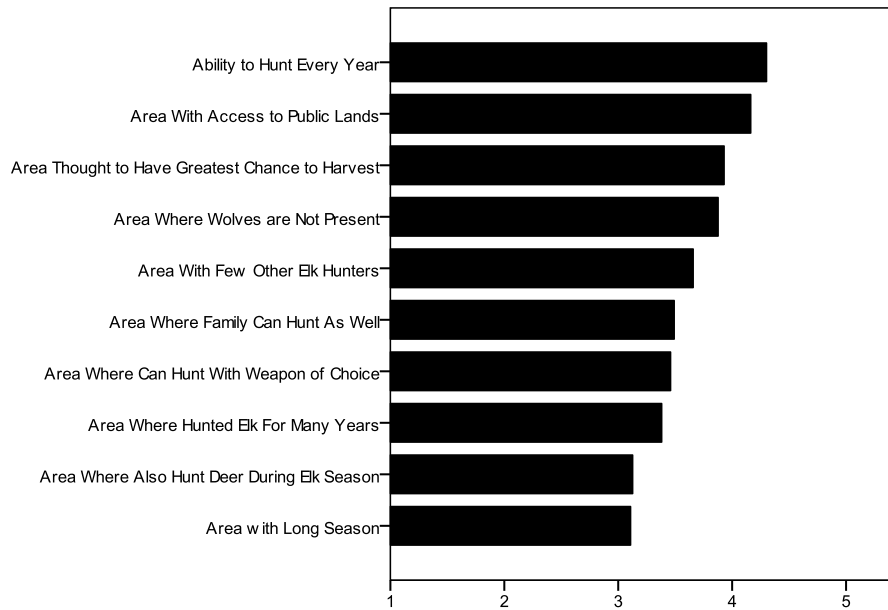
How does each characteristic affect where you
decide to hunt Elk in Idaho?

(Please circle one response for each characteristic)

- M. An area where I think I have the greatest chance of harvesting an Elk.
- N. An area that has a late end to the Elk season.
- O. An area where I will not encounter motorized hunters using OHVs.
- P. An area where I am able to use my OHV or other motorized vehicle while hunting Elk.
- Q. An area where I can hunt Elk with the weapon of my choice.
- R. An area where I have the best chance of getting drawn for an Elk hunt.
- S. An area where Wolves are not present.
- T. An area where I can also hunt Wolves.

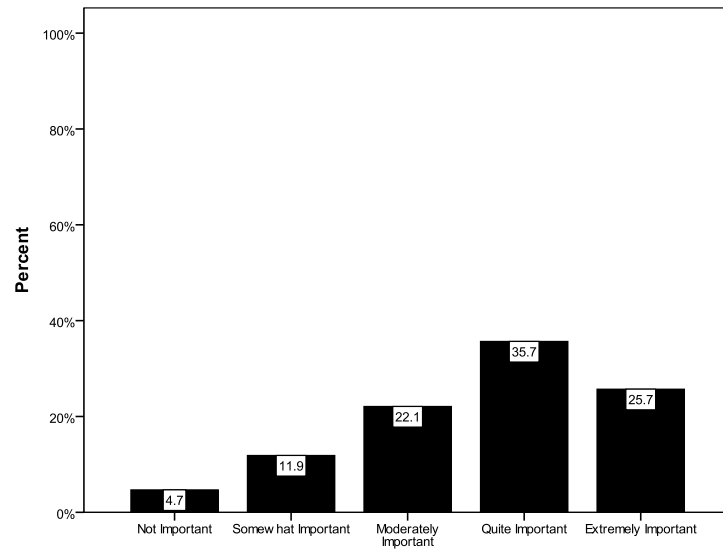
NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	QUITE IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
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1=NOT IMPORTANT; 2=SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT; 3=MODERATELY IMPORTANT; 4=QUITE IMPORTANT; 5=EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

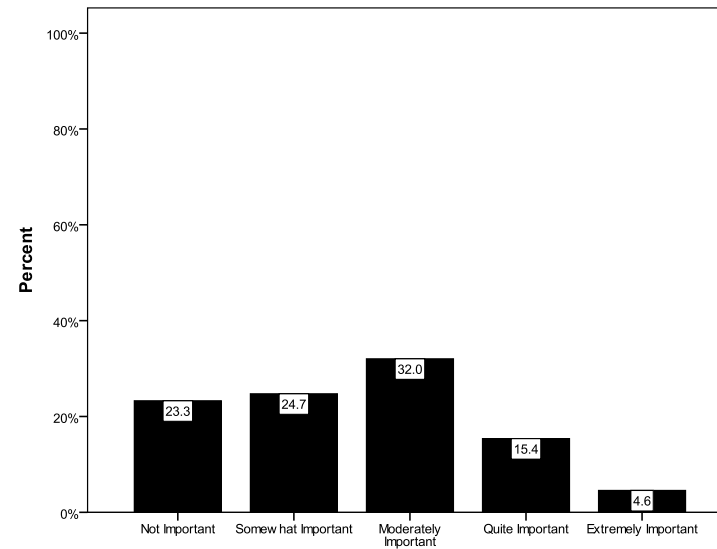


CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING CHOICE OF WHERE TO HUNT IN IDAHO

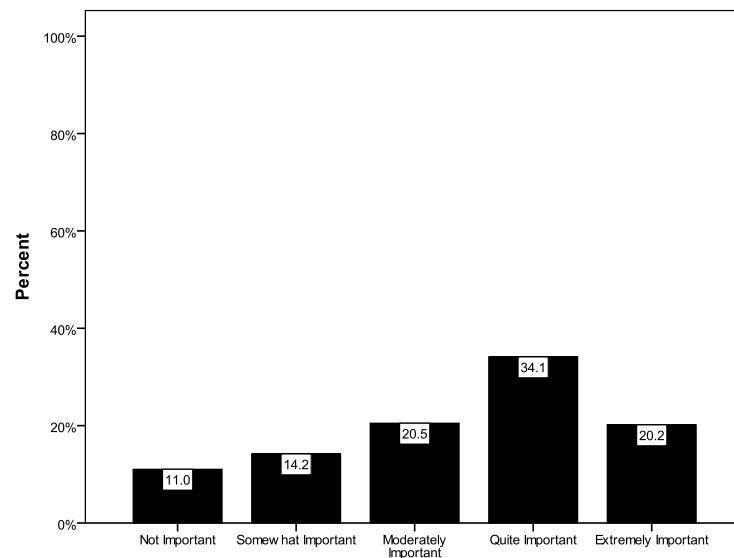
Q29: The top five characteristics that affected their choice of where to hunt Elk in Idaho were the ability to hunt every year, an area where they have access to public lands, an area where they think they have the greatest chance of harvesting an Elk, an area where wolves are not present, and an area with few other Elk hunters.



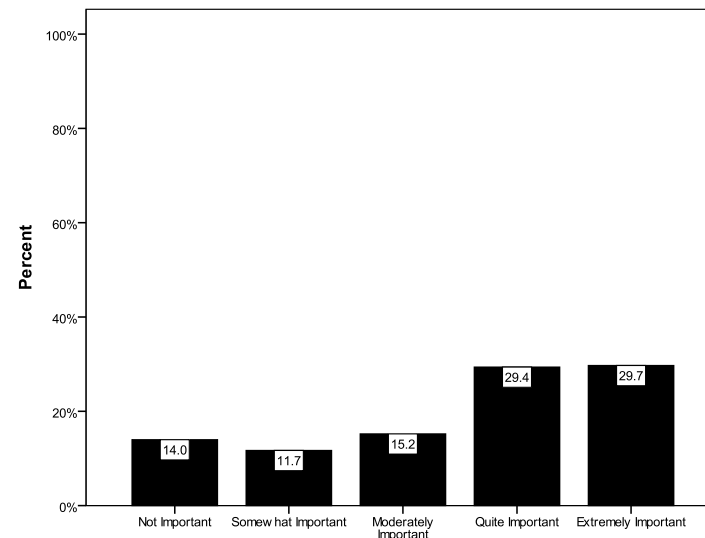
Area With Few Other Elk Hunters



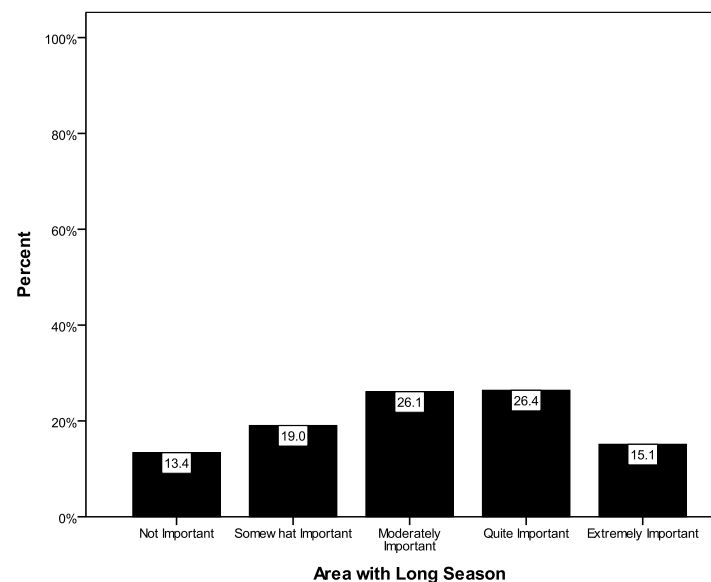
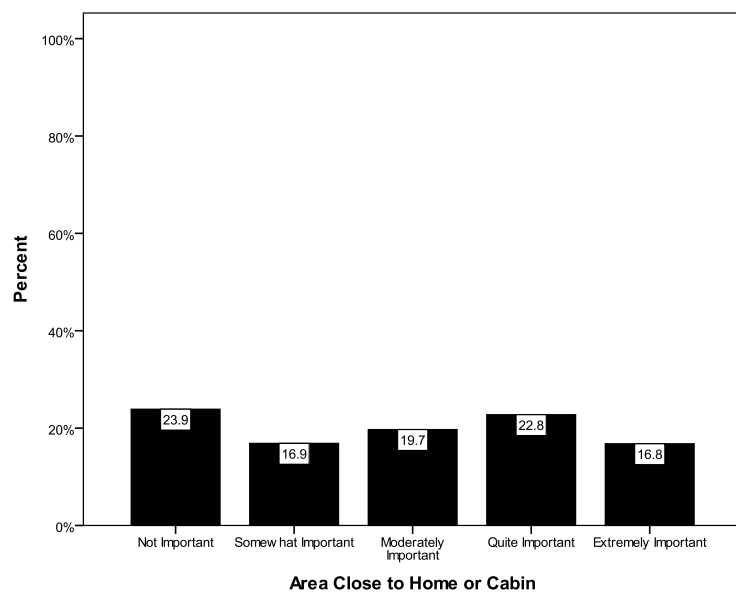
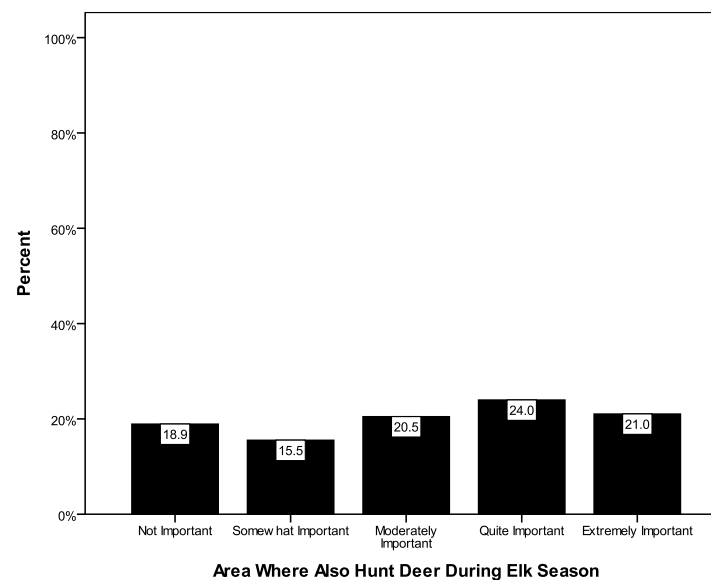
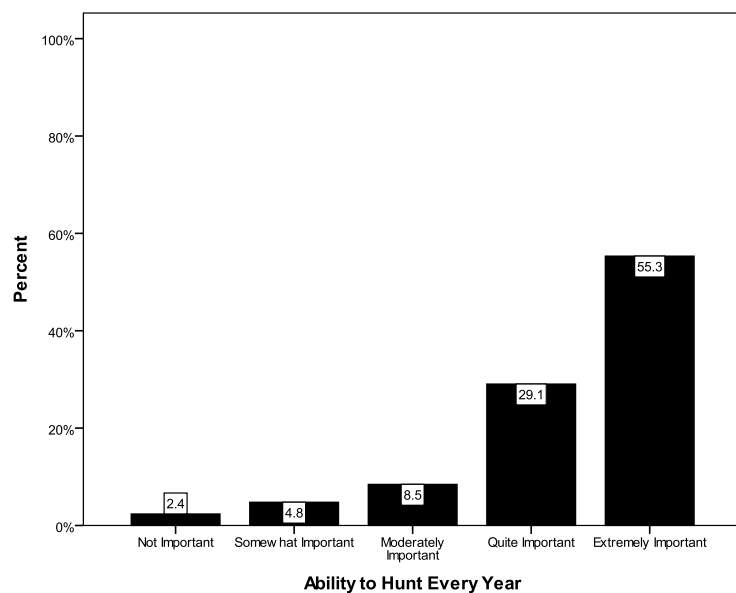
Area That Has Many But Few Bulls

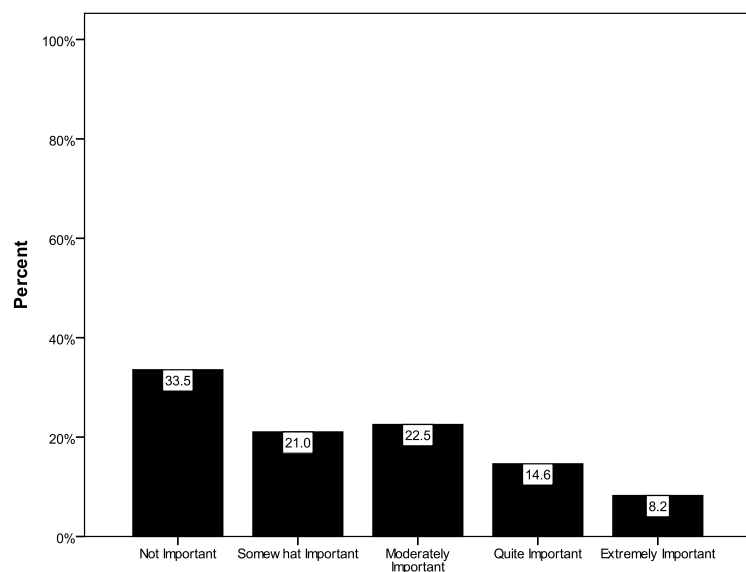
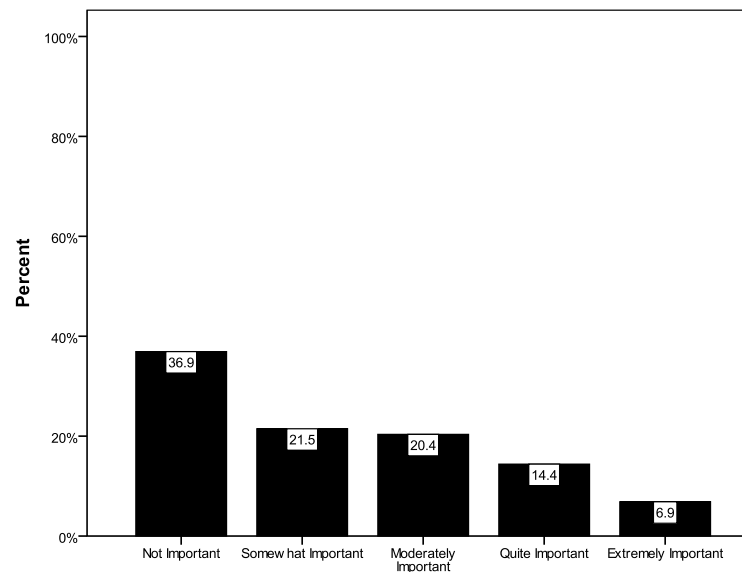
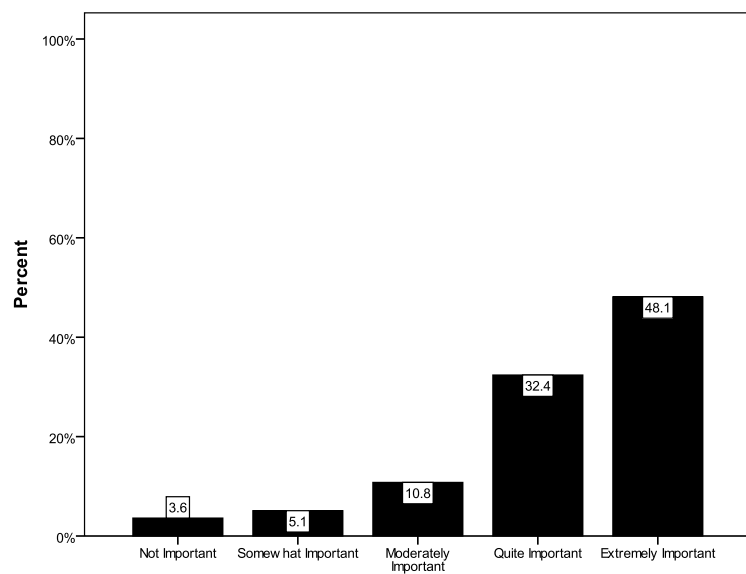
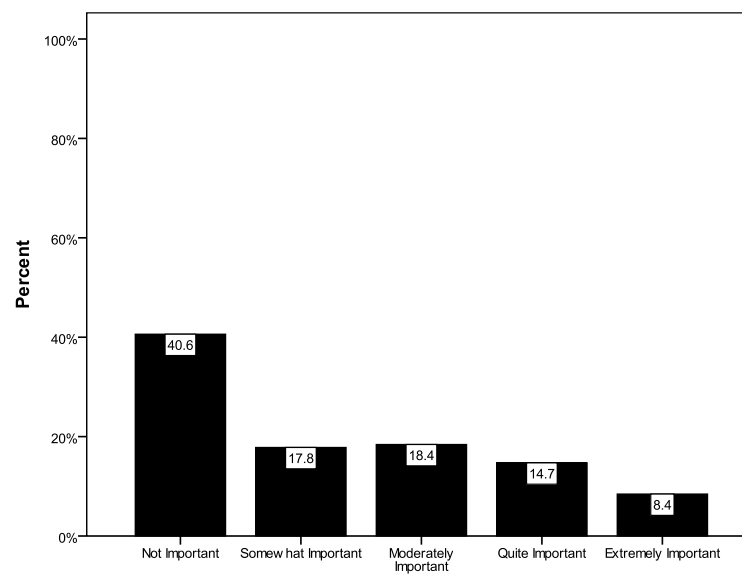


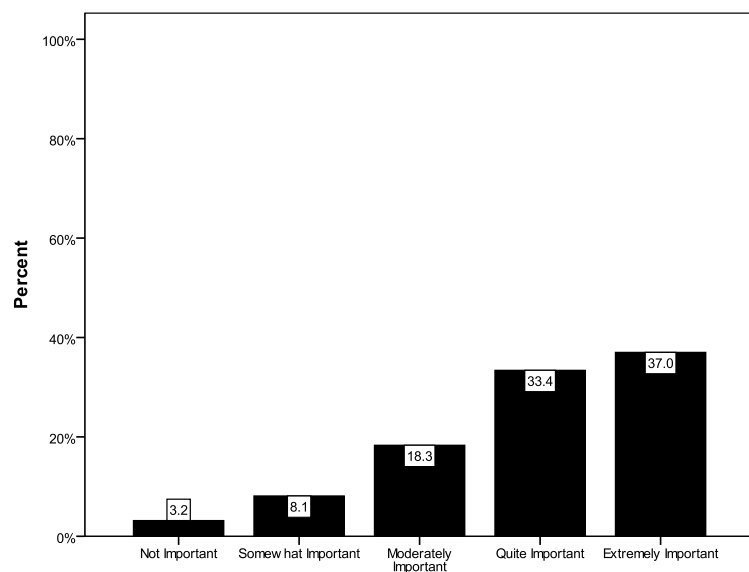
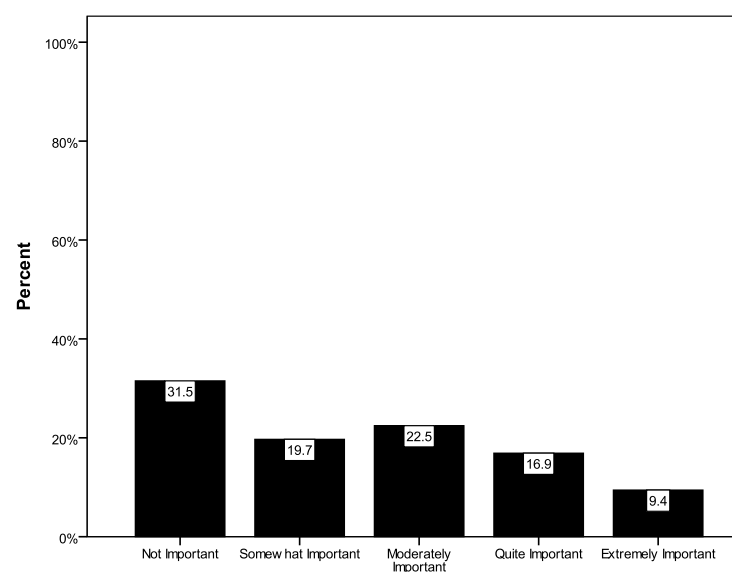
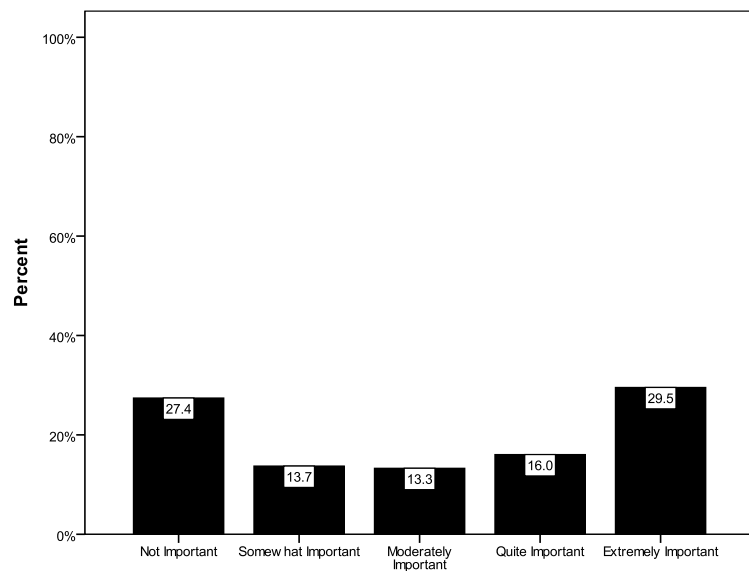
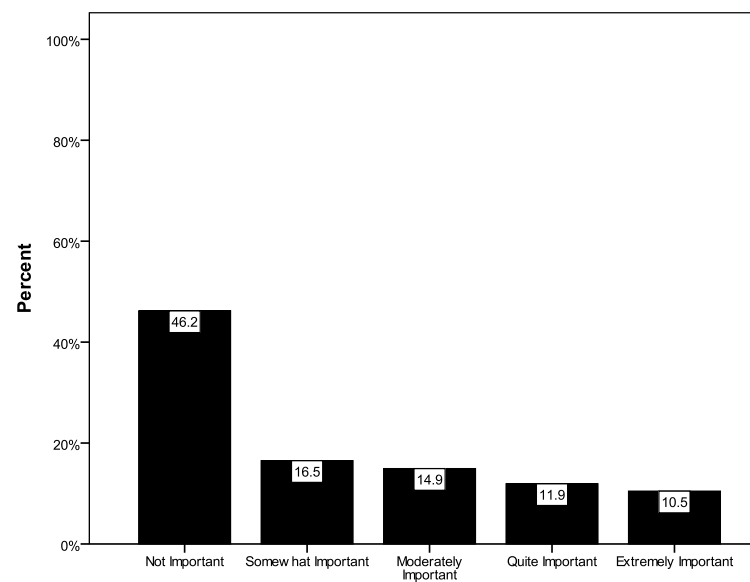
Area Where Hunted Elk For Many Years

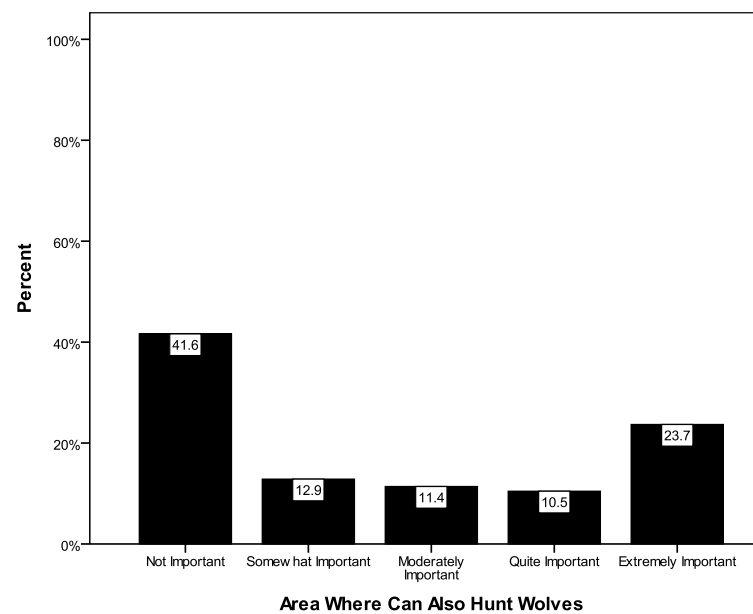
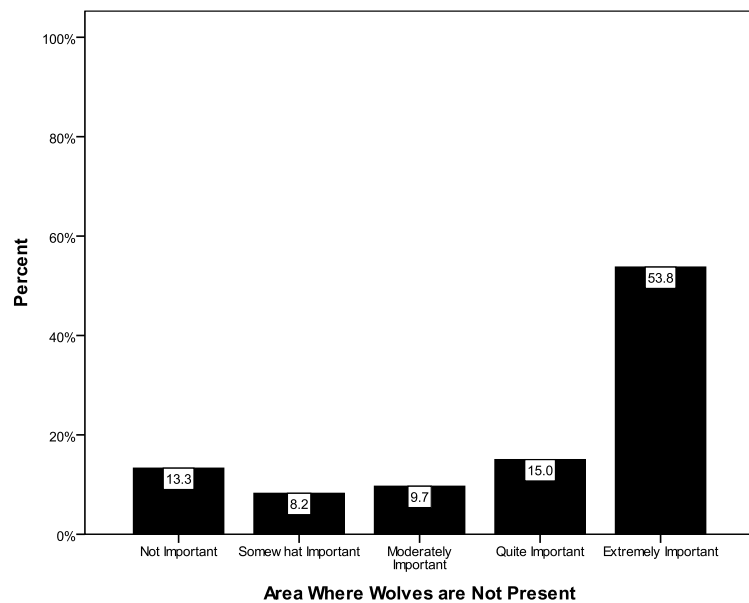
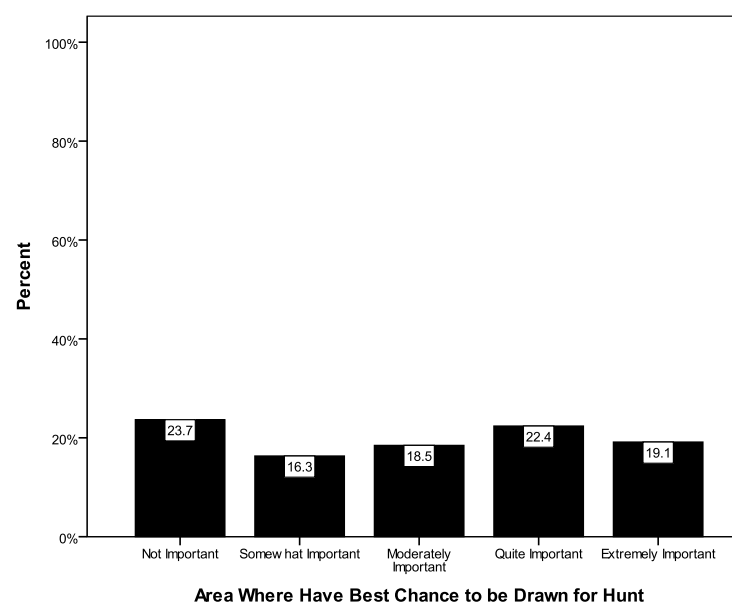
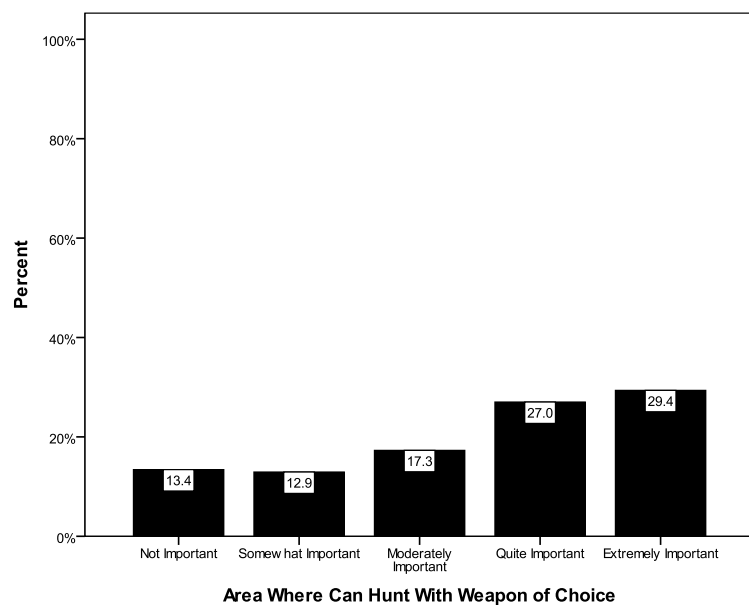


Area Where Family Can Hunt As Well



**Area That is Remote and Hard to Reach****Area That Has Early Start to Season****Area With Access to Public Lands****Area With Access to Private Lands**

**Area Thought to Have Greatest Chance to Harvest****Area That Has Late End to Season****Area Where Won't Encounter Hunters With OHVs****Area Where Able to Use OHV/Other Motorized Vehicles**



30. Are there any times during the general Elk hunting season in Idaho that you prefer or avoid? (Please check as many as apply)

A. OPENING DAY

C. FIRST WEEK

E. ANY WEEKDAY

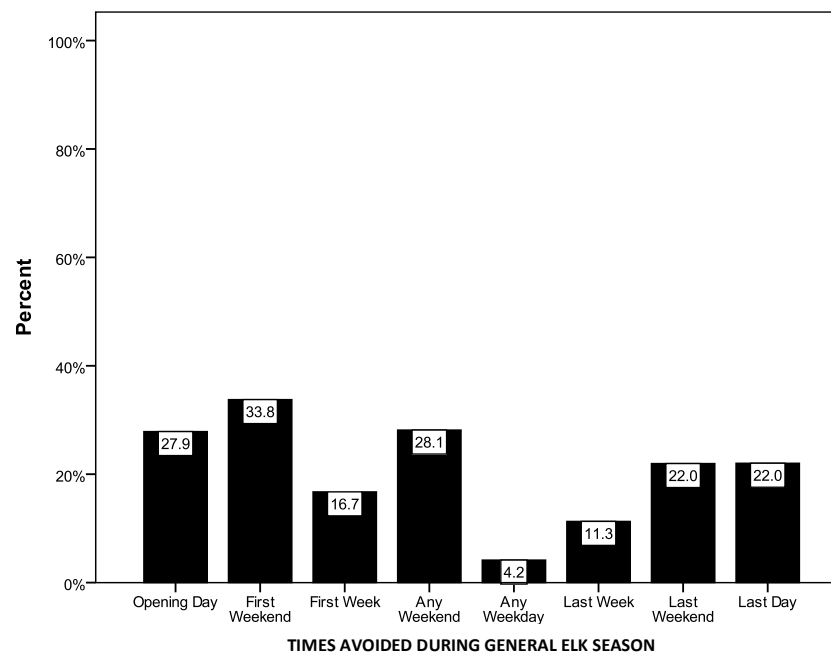
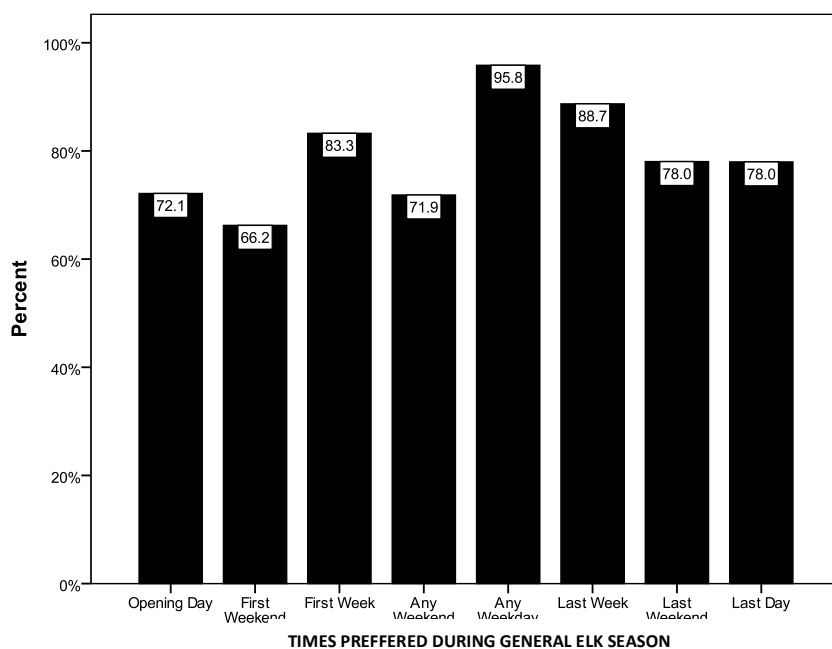
G. LAST WEEKEND

B. FIRST WEEKEND

D. ANY WEEKEND

F. LAST WEEK

H. LAST DAY



□

Q30: Elk hunters primarily prefer to hunt on any weekday, on the last week of the season or the first week of the season. They tend to avoid the first weekend, any weekend in general and opening day.

ATTRIBUTES OF A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE

31. How important to you are each of these attributes for a quality Idaho Elk hunting experience?

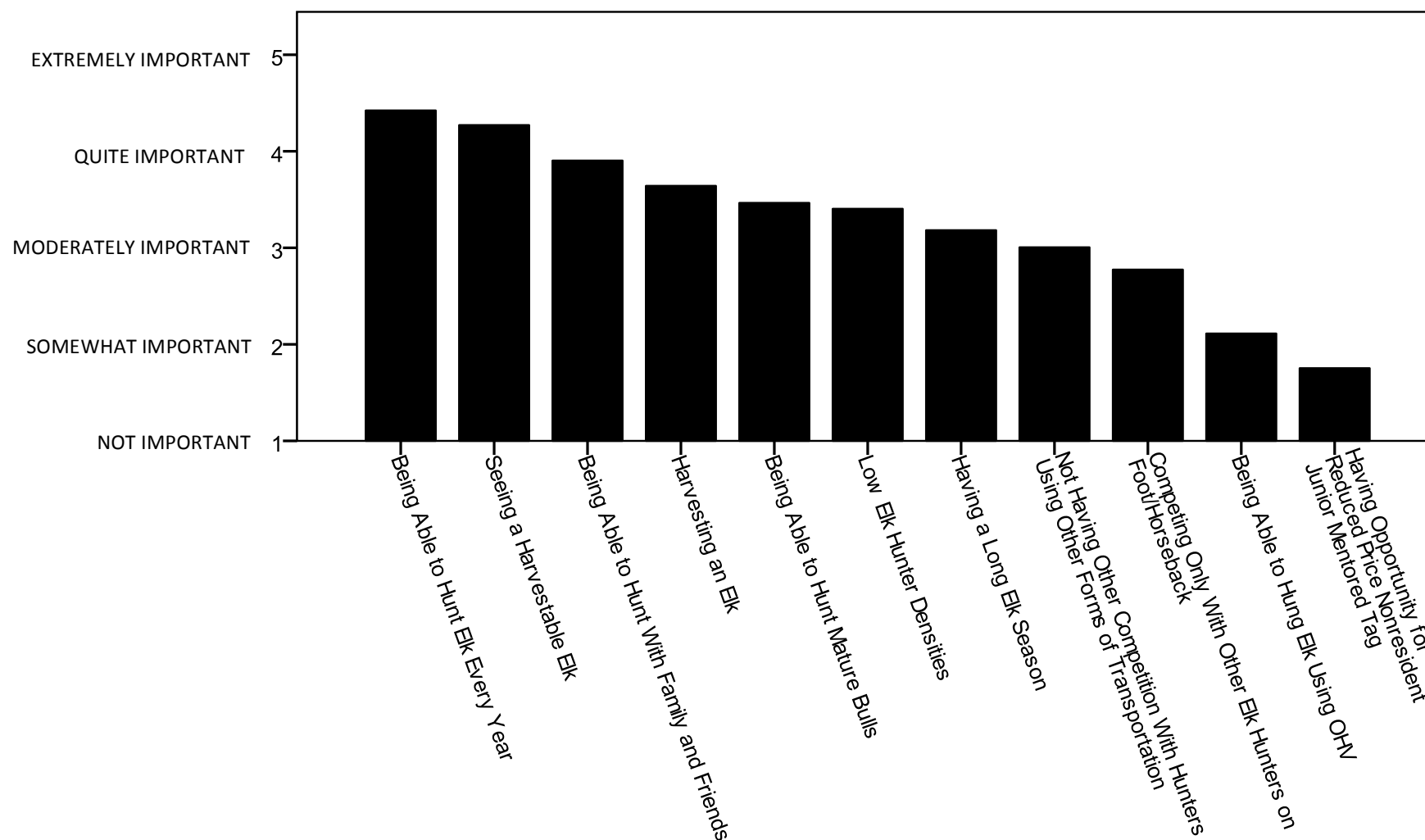
ATTRIBUTES OF AN IDAHO ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE

- A. Low Elk hunter densities.
- B. Harvesting an Elk.
- C. Seeing harvestable Elk.
- D. Being able to hunt for mature bulls.
- E. Being able to hunt Elk with family and friends.
- F. Being able to hunt Elk every year.
- G. Being able to hunt Elk using an OHV.
- H. Competing only with other Elk hunters on foot or horseback.
- I. Not having competition from other Elk hunters using other forms of transportation (*OHV, mountain bike, etc.*).
- J. Having the opportunity for reduced price nonresident junior mentored tag.
- K. Having a long Elk season.

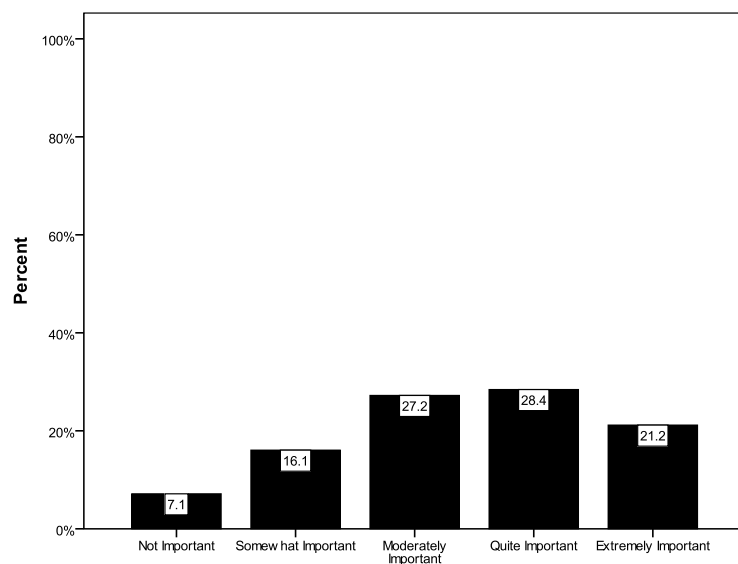
How important is each attribute to the quality of your Idaho Elk hunting experience?

(Please circle one response for each attribute)

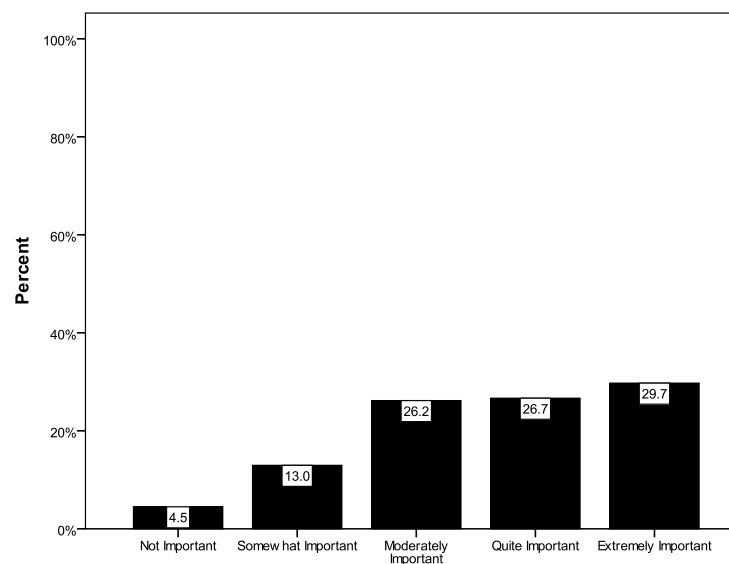
NOT	SOMEWHAT	MODERATELY	QUITE	EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT



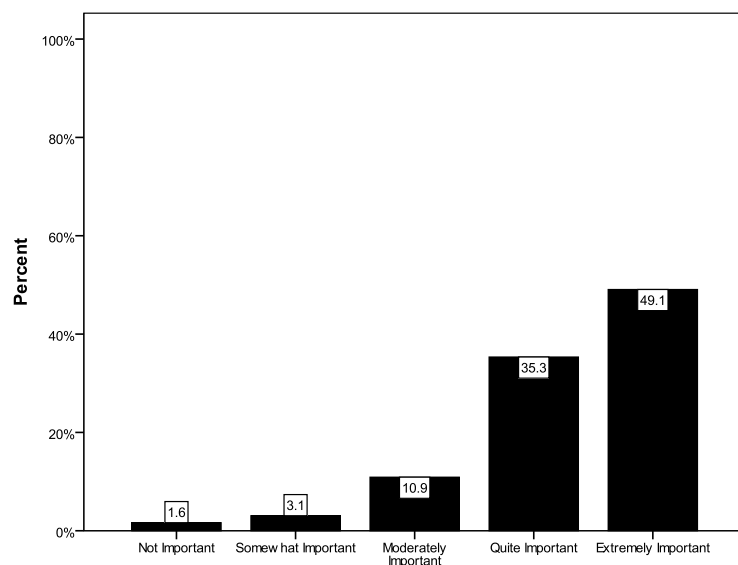
IMPORTANCE OF ATTRIBUTES FOR A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE IN IDAHO



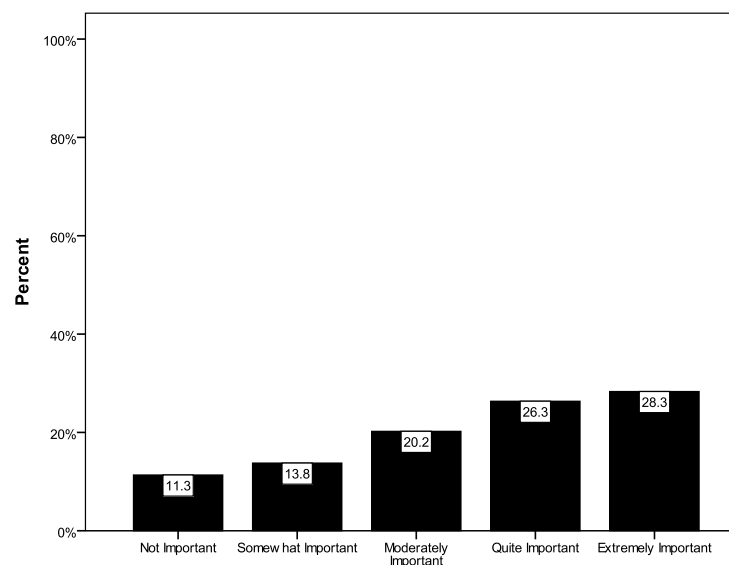
Low Elk Hunter Densities



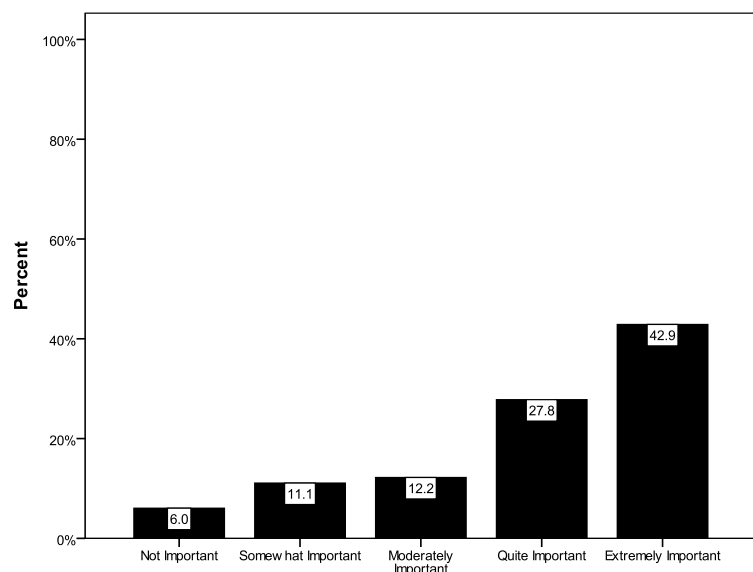
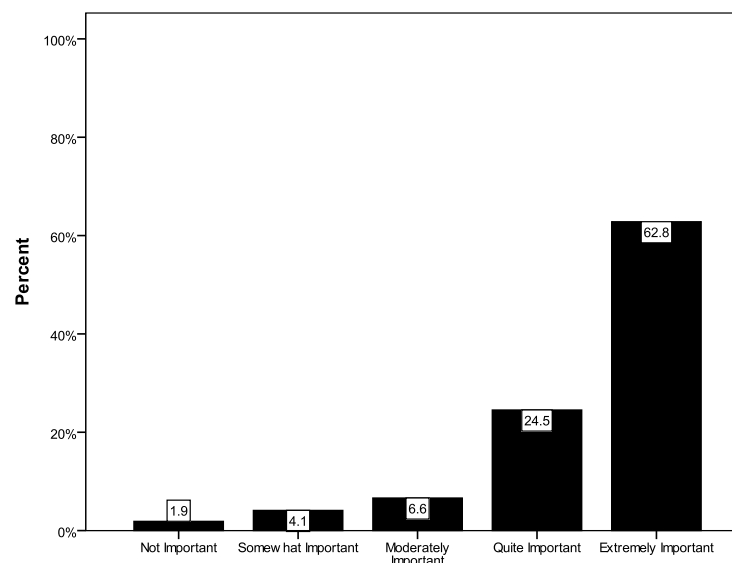
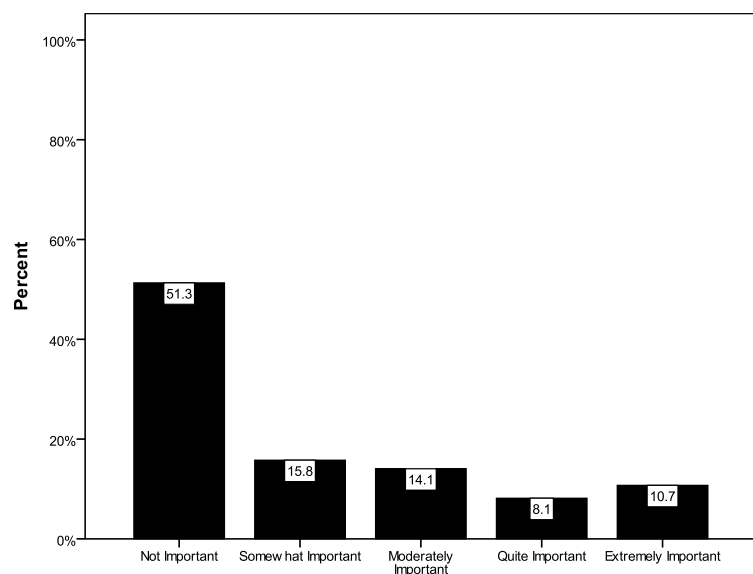
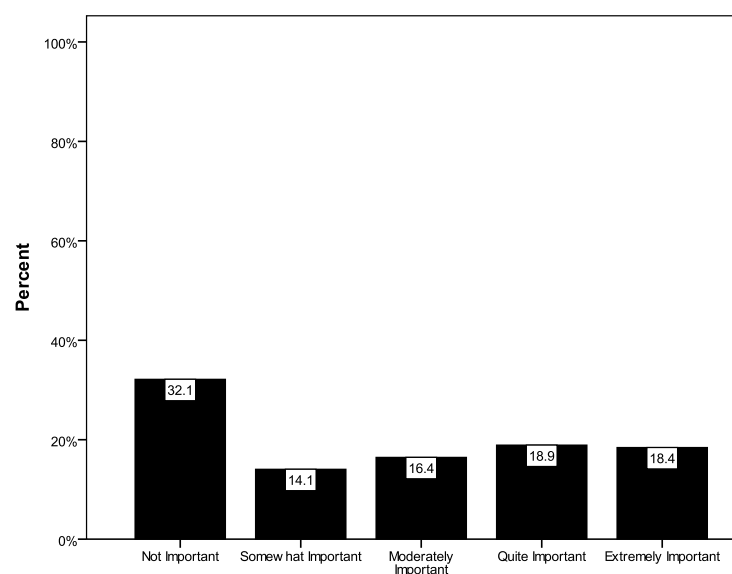
Harvesting an Elk

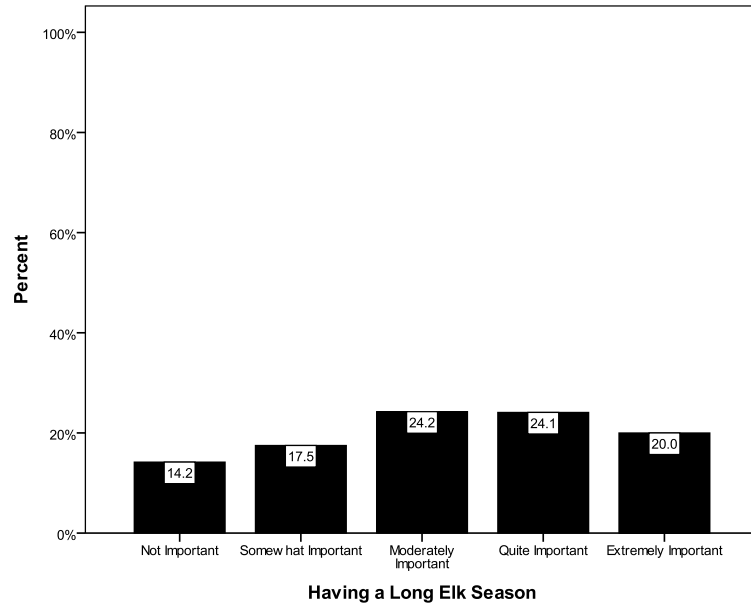
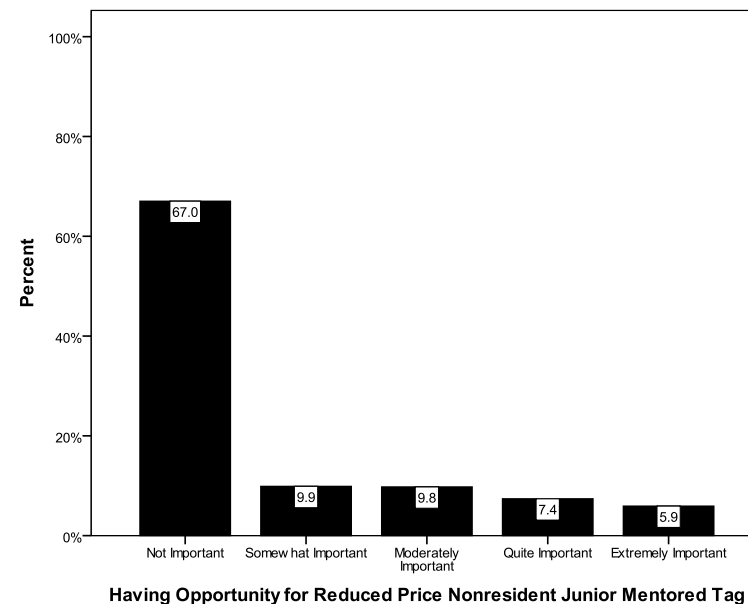
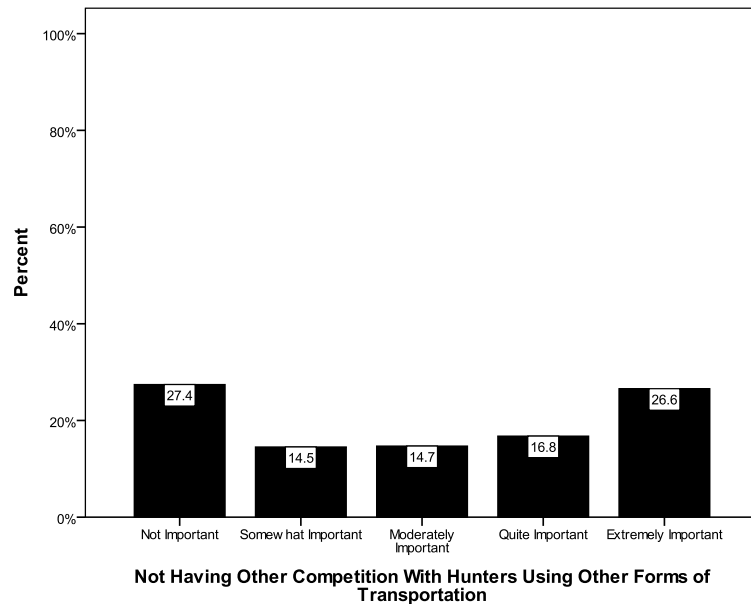


Seeing a Harvestable Elk



Being Able to Hunt Mature Bulls

**Being Able to Hunt With Family and Friends****Being Able to Hunt Elk Every Year****Being Able to Hunt Elk Using OHV****Competing Only With Other Elk Hunters on Foot/Horseback**

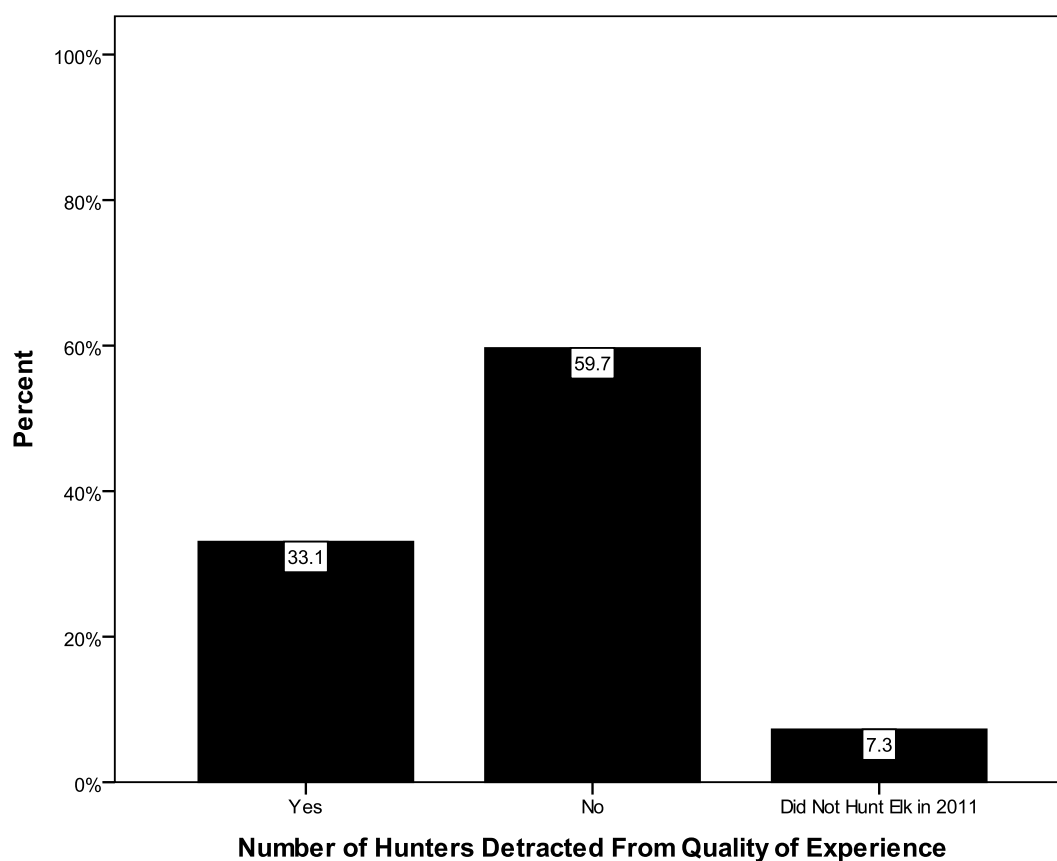


Q31: Attributes that define a quality Elk hunting experience center on preserving the hunting opportunity. Most important were being able to hunt for Elk every year and seeing a harvestable Elk. These attributes were closely followed by being able to hunt Elk with family and friends, harvesting an Elk, being able to hunt for mature bulls, and low Elk hunter densities. Of much less importance were having the opportunity for reduced price nonresident junior mentored tag and being able to hunt Elk using an OHV.

HUNTING SATISFACTION

33. Were there times during your 2011 Elk season when the numbers of other hunters seriously detracted from the quality of your hunting experience? *(Please check one response)*

☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ I DID NOT HUNT ELK IN 2011



□ Q33: One-third of the respondents felt that there were times when the numbers of other hunters seriously detracted from their hunting experience.

Now, some questions about the satisfaction you experienced with Elk hunting in Idaho in 2011.

37. How satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of your 2011 Elk hunting experience?

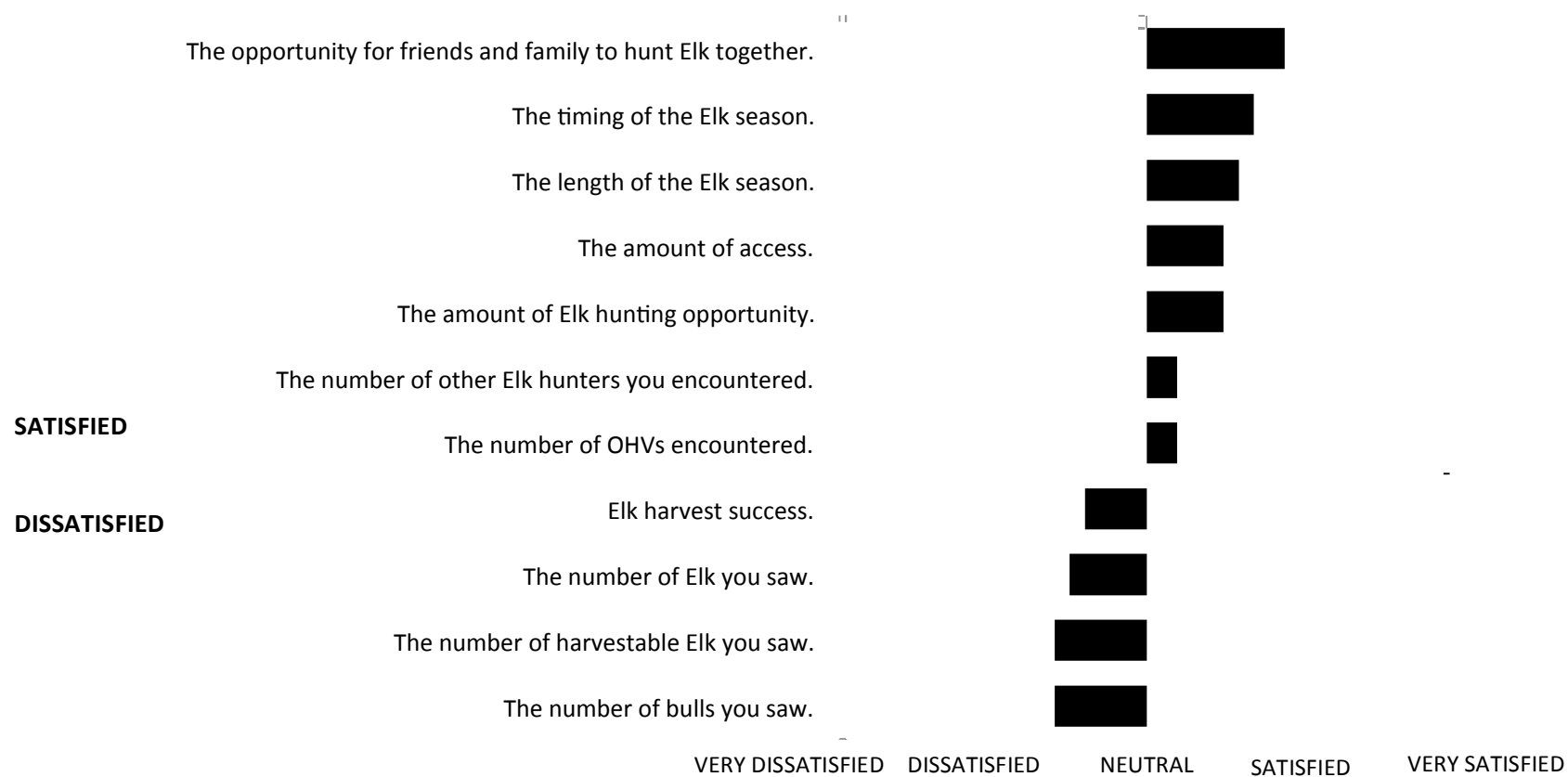
If you DID NOT HUNT ELK IN IDAHO IN 2011, PLEASE CHECK HERE ☐ AND CONTINUE TO Q-38 ON THE NEXT PAGE → → →

ATTRIBUTES OF YOUR 2011 IDAHO ELK
HUNTING EXPERIENCE

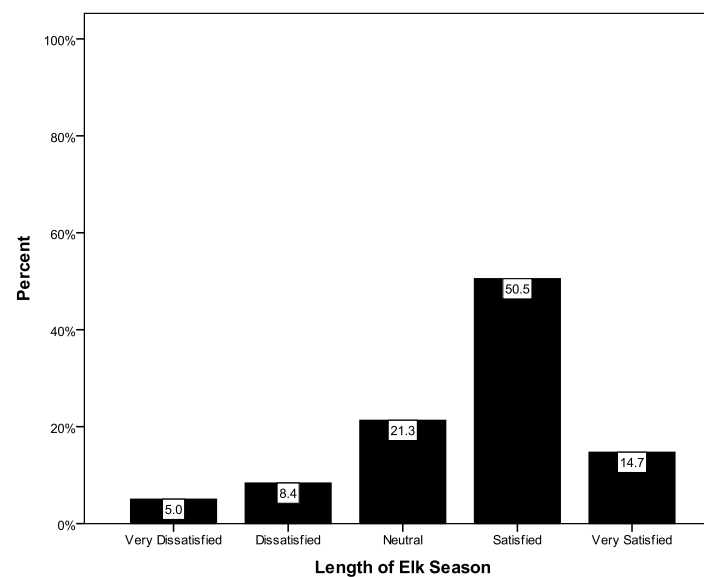
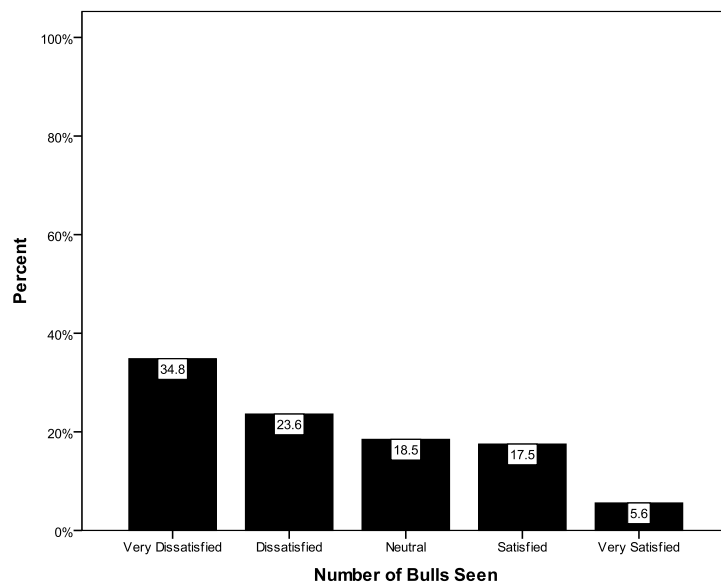
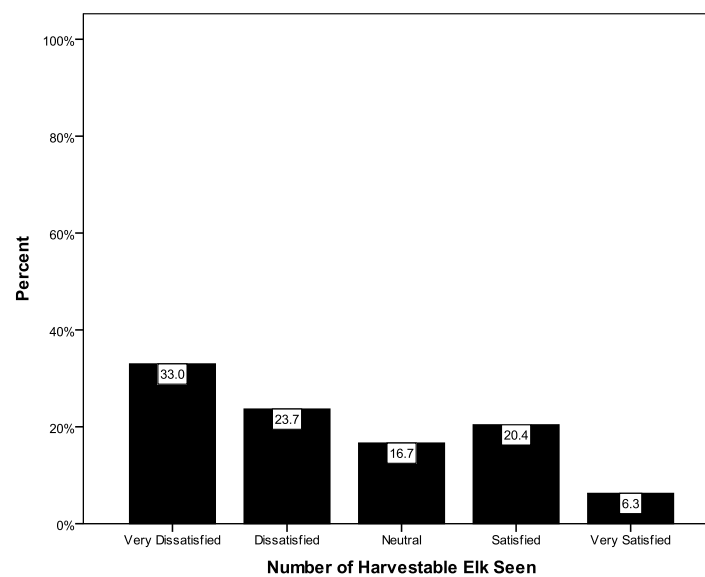
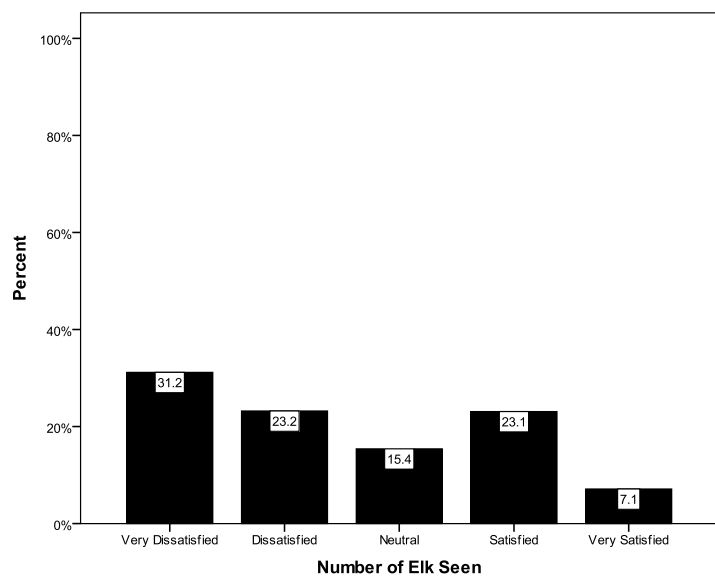
- A. The number of Elk you saw.
- B. The number of harvestable Elk you saw.
- C. The numbers of bulls you saw.
- D. The length of the Elk season.
- E. The timing of the Elk season.
- F. The number of other Elk hunters you encountered.
- G. The amount of access.
- H. The number of OHVs encountered.
- I. The amount of Elk hunting opportunity.
- J. Elk harvest success.
- K. The opportunity for friends and family to hunt Elk together.

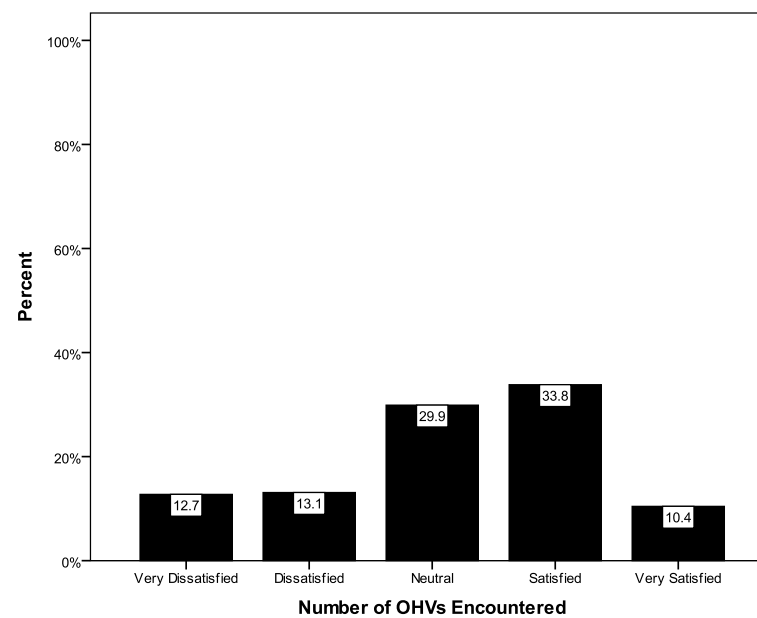
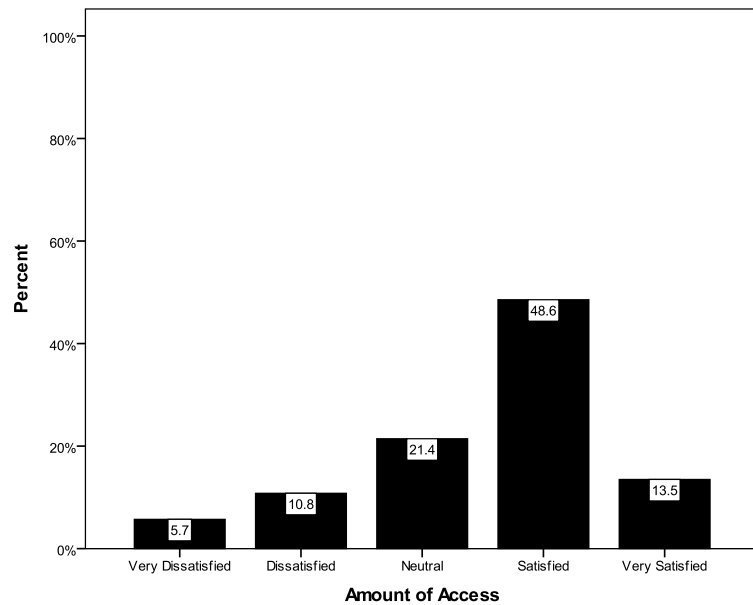
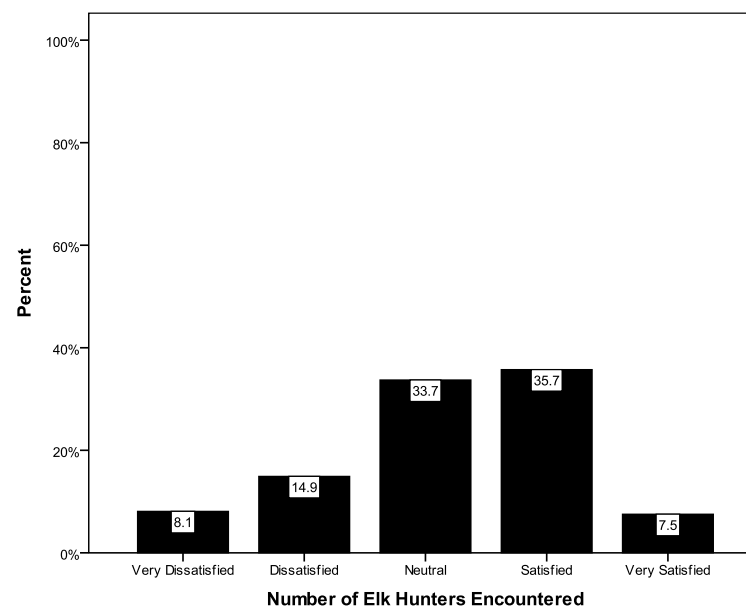
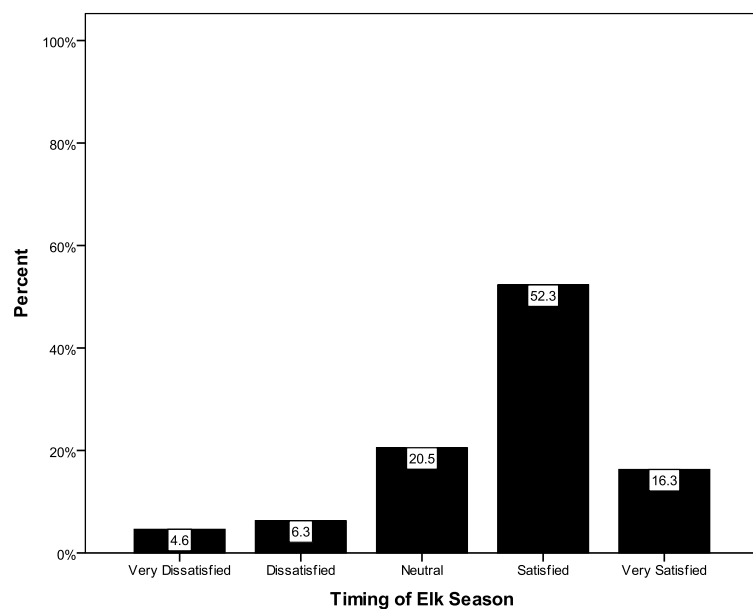
How satisfied were you with your
2011 Idaho Elk hunting experience?
(Please check one response for each attribute)

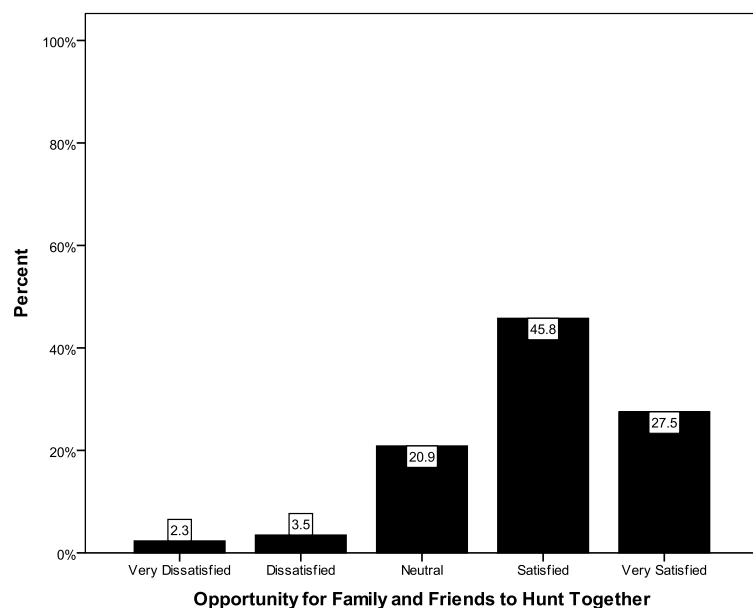
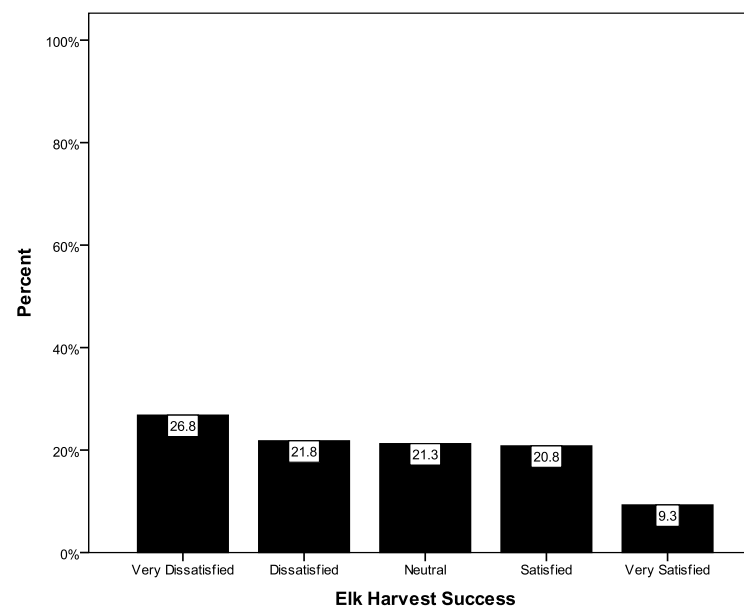
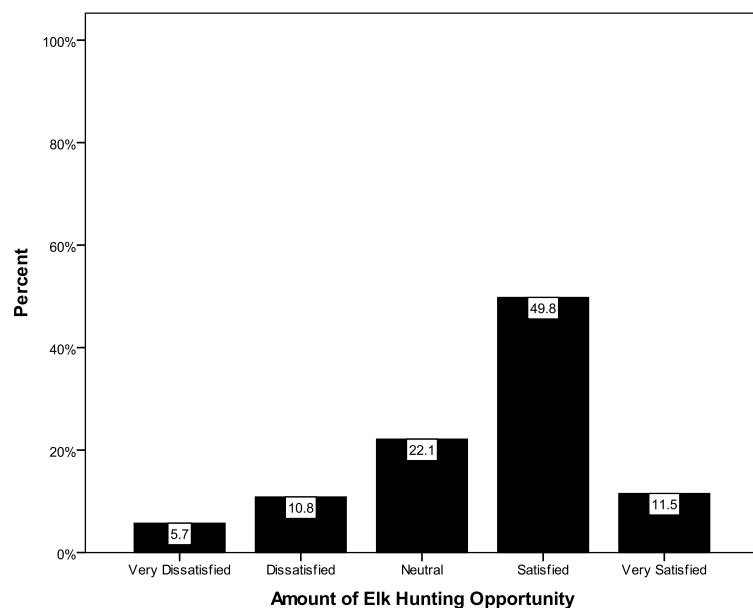
VERY DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	NEUTRAL	SATISFIED	VERY SATISFIED
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SATISFACTION WITH ASPECTS OF 2011 ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE







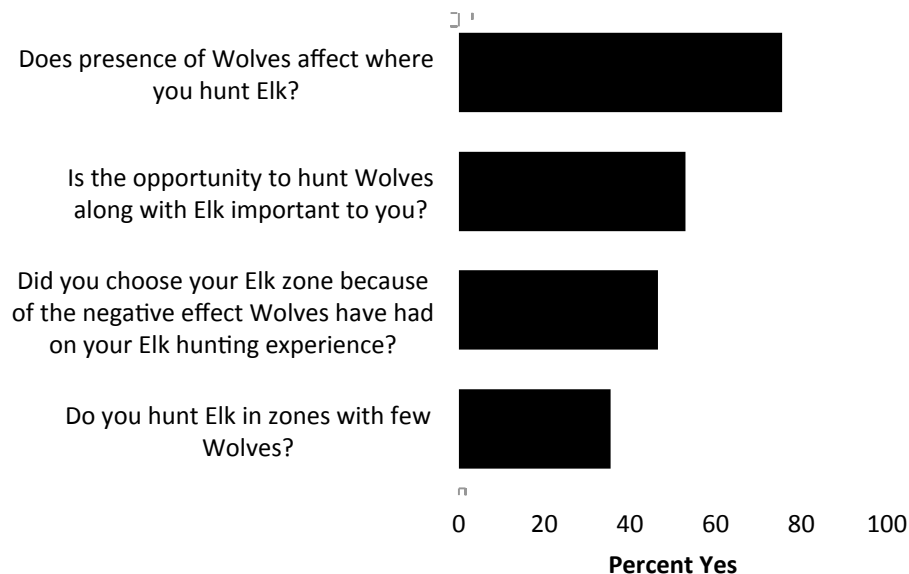
Q37: The four aspects Elk hunters were most satisfied with in 2011 were the opportunity for friends and family to hunt Elk together, the timing of the Elk season, the length of the season, and the amount of Elk hunting opportunity. They were somewhat satisfied with the number of OHVs encountered and the number of Elk hunters encountered. They were least satisfied with the number of bulls seen, the number of harvestable Elk seen, the number of Elk seen, and Elk harvest success.

PERCEPTIONS OF PREDATORS

Two questions about predators in Idaho.

39. How do Wolves affect your Idaho Elk hunting experience? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

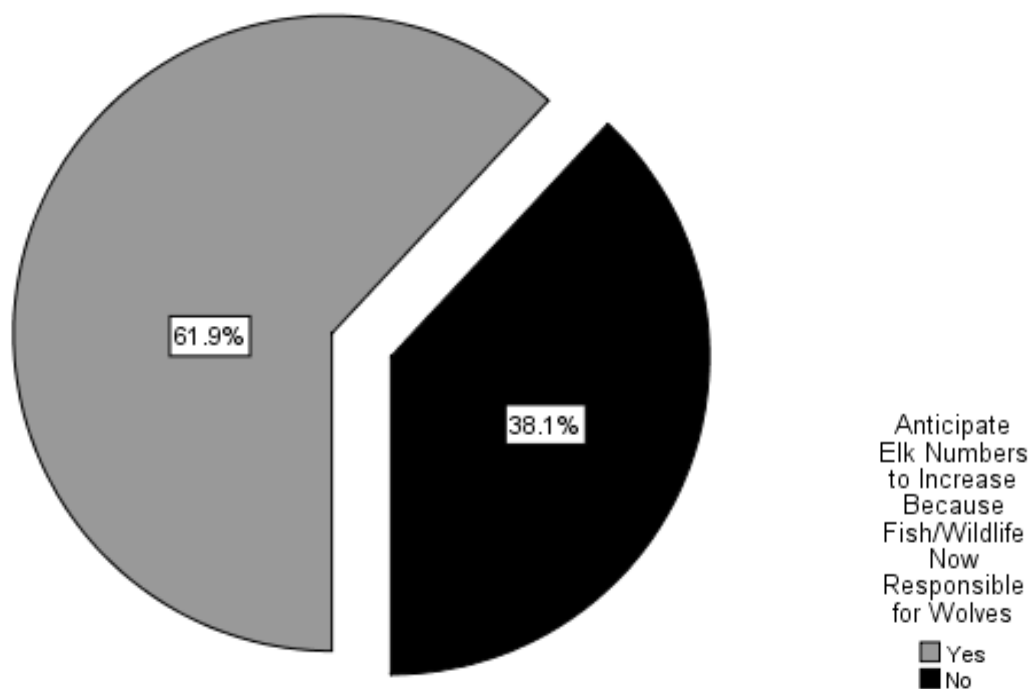
- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| A. Does the presence of Wolves affect <u>where</u> you hunt Elk? | YES | NO |
| B. Is the opportunity to hunt Wolves along with Elk important to you? | YES | NO |
| C. Did you choose your Elk zone because of the negative effect Wolves have had on your Elk hunting experience? | YES | NO |
| D. Do you hunt Elk in zones with few Wolves? | YES | NO |



Q39: Three-quarters of the Elk hunters reported that the presence of wolves affected where they hunt Elk, and just over one-half said the opportunity to hunt Wolves along with Elk is important to them. Close to one-half (46.5%) hunt Elk in zones with few Wolves. Over two-thirds (64%) said they did not choose their Elk zone because of the negative effect Wolves have had on their Elk hunting experience.

40. Do you anticipate Elk numbers to increase now that Idaho Fish and Game is responsible for managing wolves?
(Please check one response)

☐ YES ☐ NO



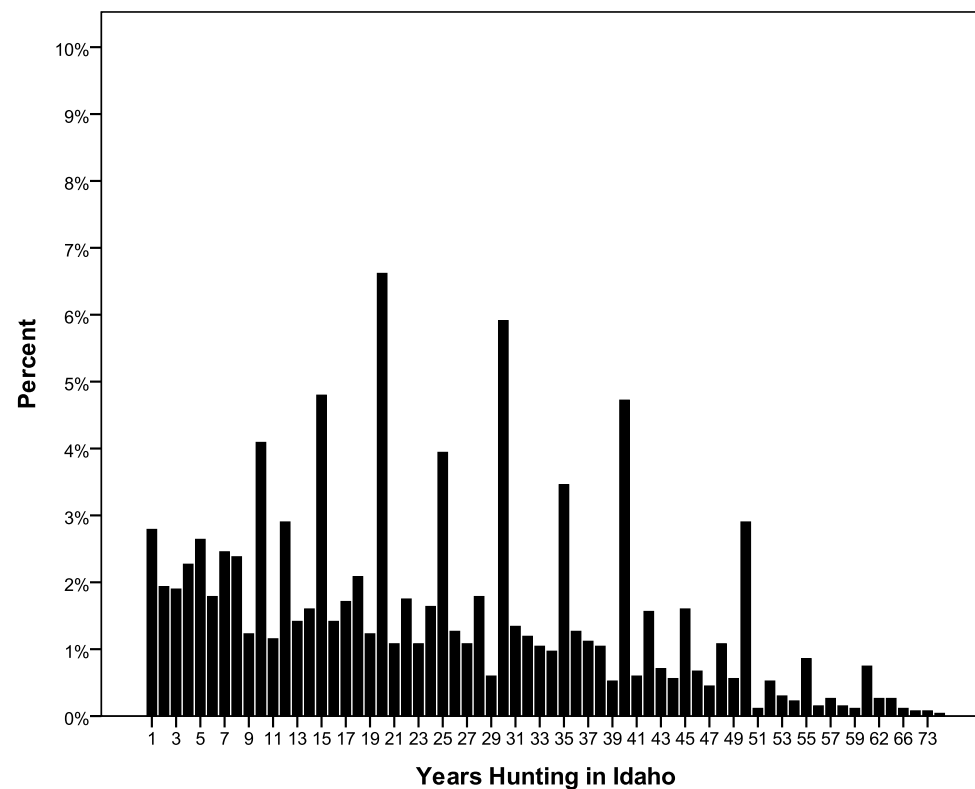
- Q40: Almost two-thirds of the Elk hunters anticipate Elk numbers to increase now that IDFG is responsible for managing wolves.

DEMOGRAPHICS

First, some questions about your general hunting behavior.

1. About how many years have you hunted in Idaho? (Please enter number of years)

_____ YEARS



- **Q1: The respondents have a considerable amount of experience hunting in Idaho. On average, they have hunted for 49.3 years in Idaho, and some have hunted here over 50 years.**

2. How often do you hunt each of the following game species in Idaho?

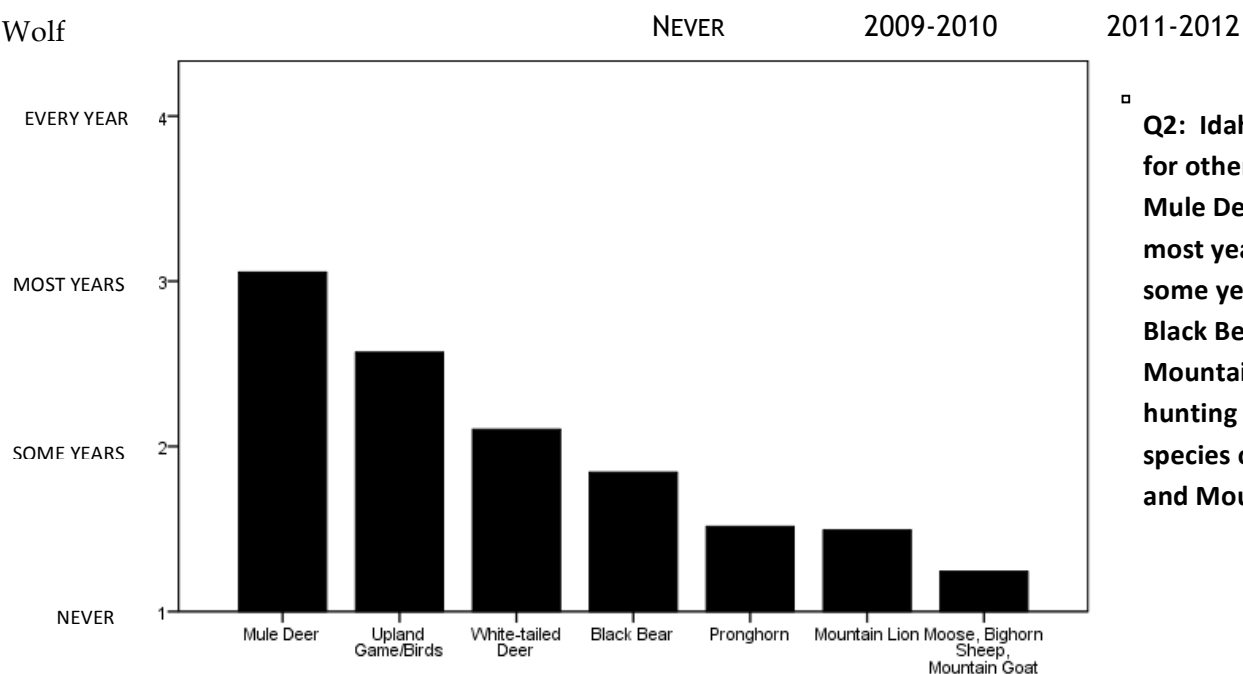
GAME SPECIES

- A. Black Bear
- B. Moose, Bighorn Sheep,
Mountain Goat (*one in a lifetime*)
- C. Mountain Lion
- D. Mule Deer
- E. Pronghorn
- F. Upland Game/ Birds
- G. White-tailed Deer
- H. Wolf

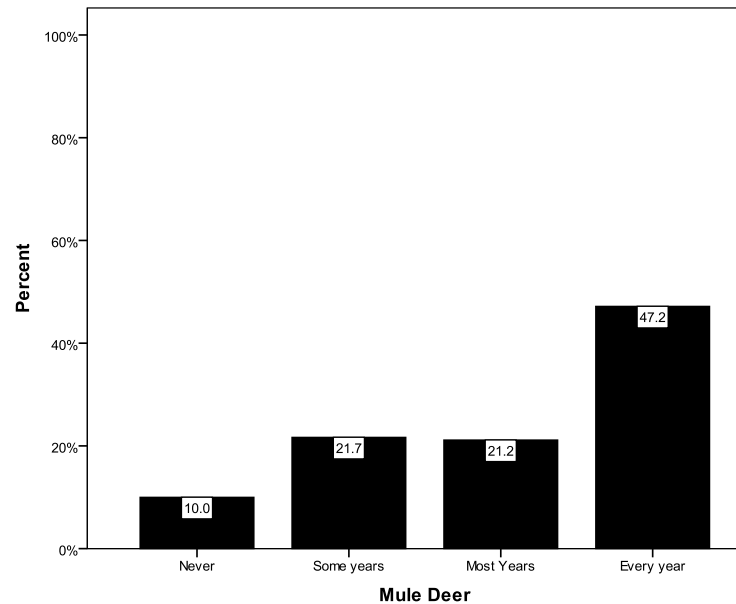
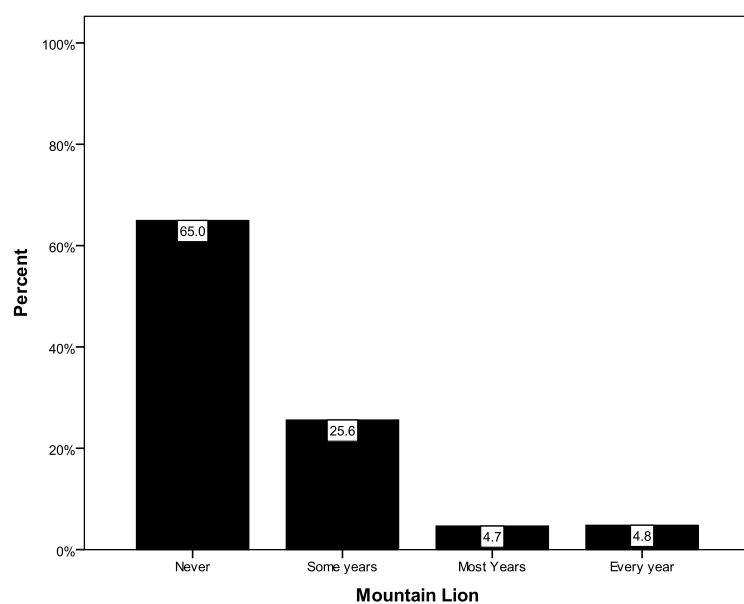
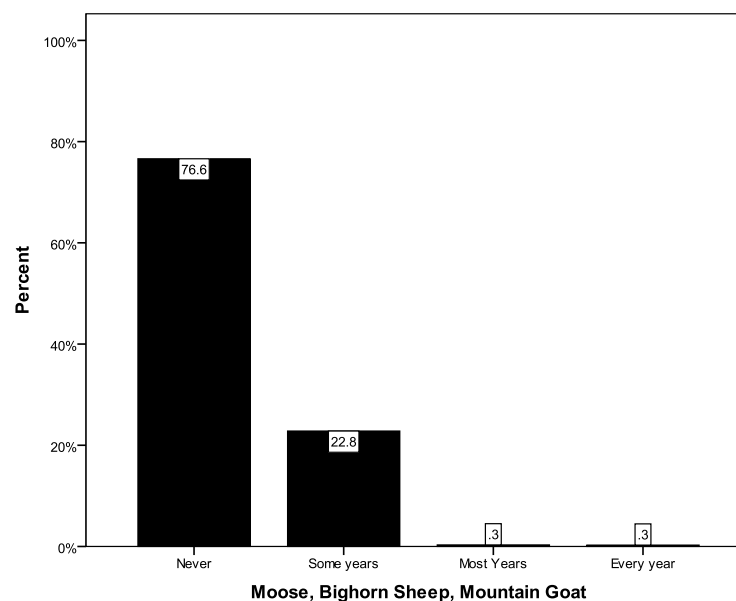
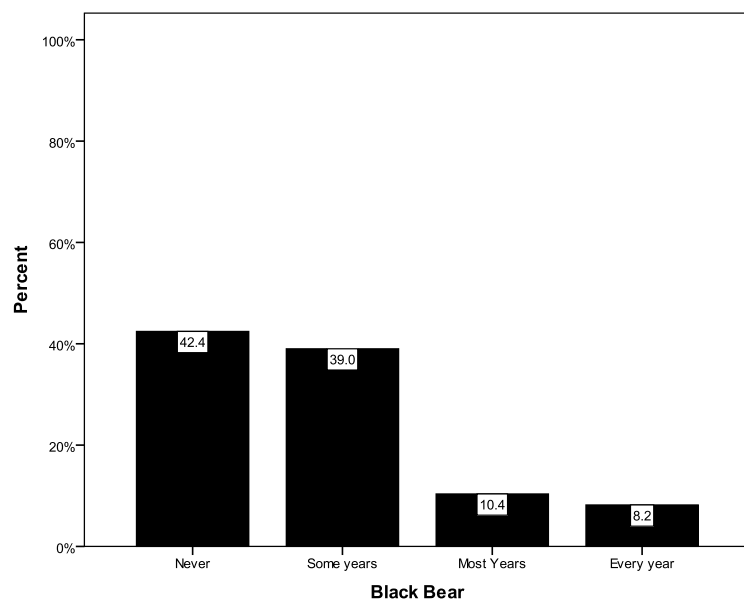
How often do you hunt the following species in Idaho?

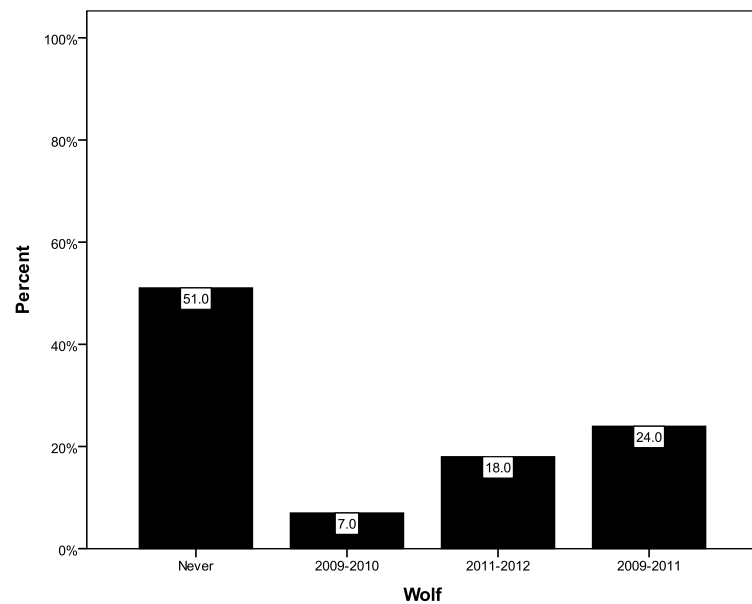
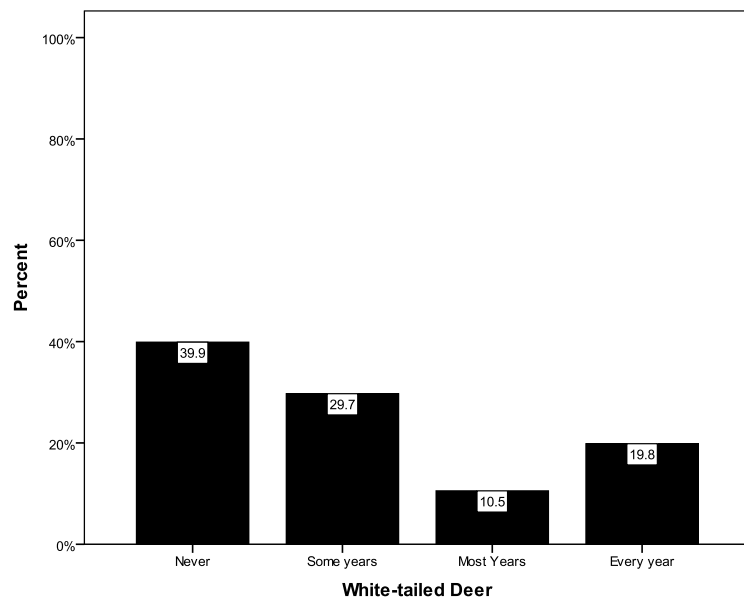
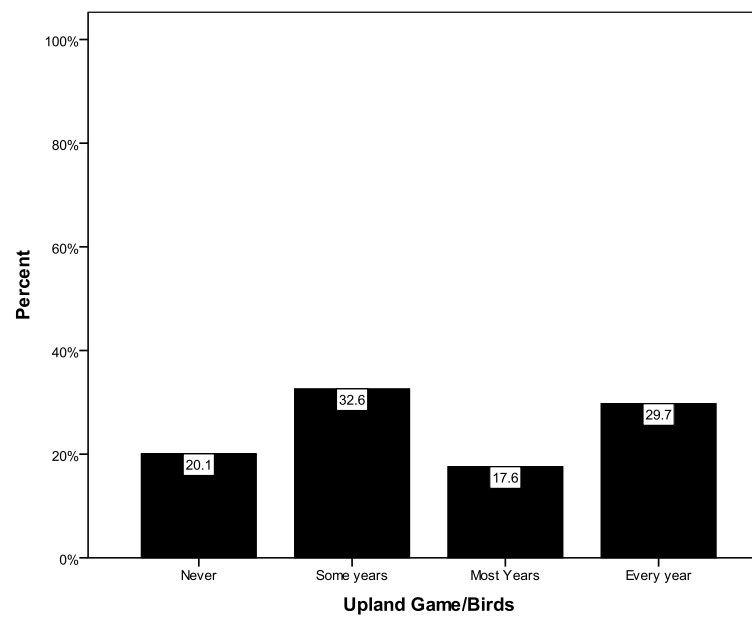
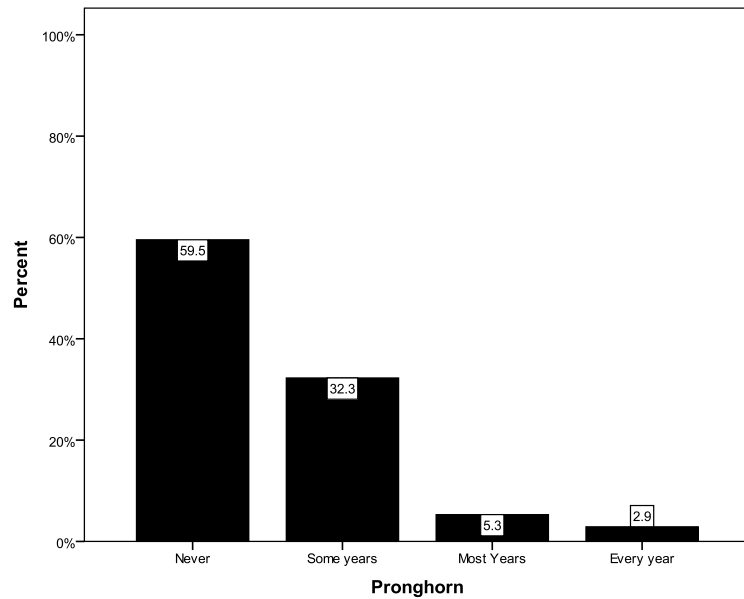
(Please circle one response for each species)

NEVER SOME YEARS MOST YEARS EVERY YEAR



Q2: Idaho Elk hunters also hunt for other species. Many hunt Mule Deer and upland game birds most years. Others also hunt some years for White-tailed deer, Black Bear, Pronghorn, and Mountain Lion. Only a few report hunting for the one-in-a-lifetime species of Moose, Bighorn Sheep, and Mountain Goat.

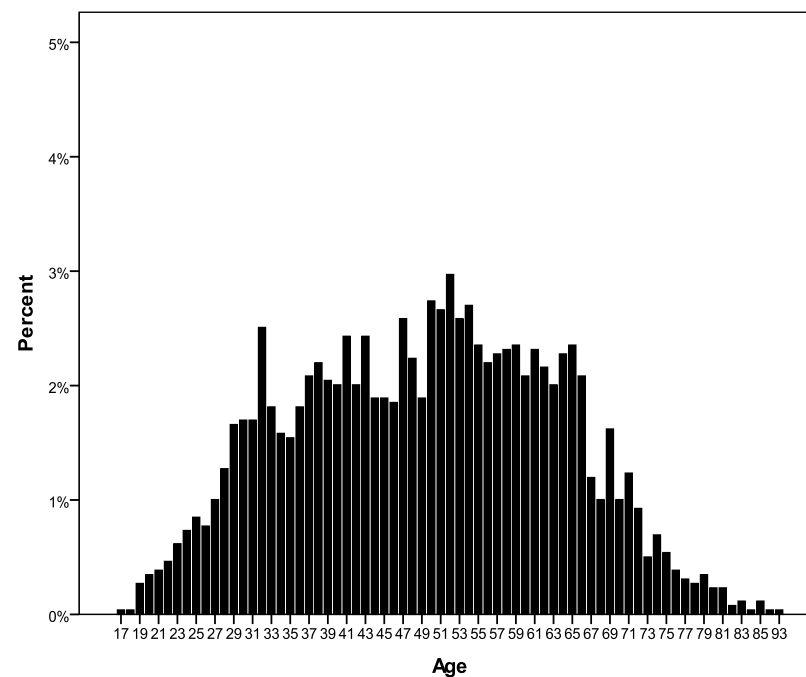
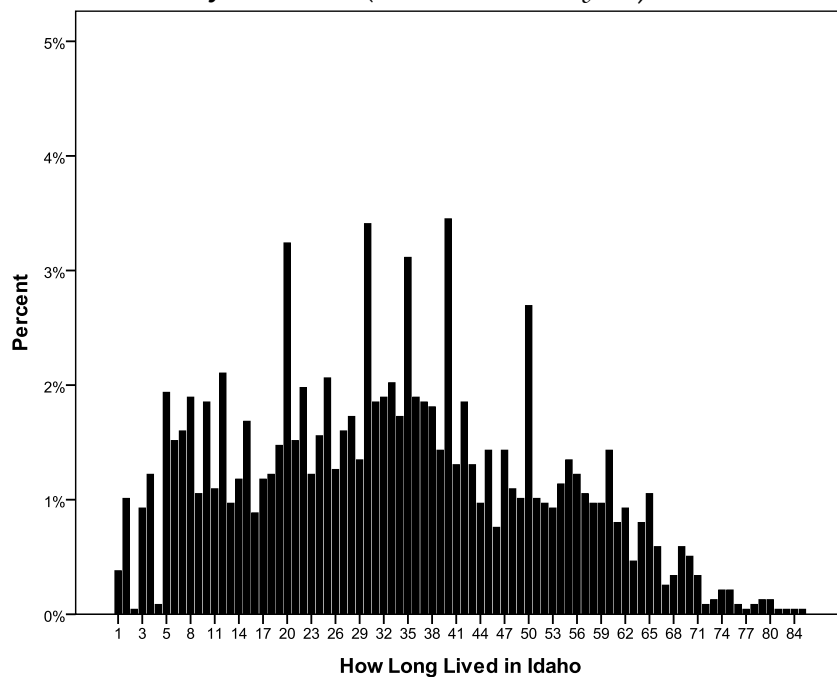




Finally, some questions about you!

42. How long have you lived in Idaho? (Please enter the number of years) _____ YEARS

43. When were you born? (Please enter the year) I WAS BORN IN 19_____



- Idaho Elk hunters have lived in Idaho an average of 33 years and have an average age of 49.3 years. The youngest respondents were 18, and the oldest were 93 years young. They have hunted in Idaho for an average of 24 years and have hunted Elk for an average of 20.3 years.

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